



Crusoe's Chains

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Being a man in Britain and Australia, c.1788-1840

Karen Downing

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**A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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This thesis contains no material which has previously been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or institution and, to the best of my knowledge, contains no materials previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made.

Abstract

This thesis is a study of conceptions of manliness in Britain and the Australian colonies from around 1788 to the 1840s, and the uneasiness those conceptions caused in men's lives. It explores the rarely studied interrelationship between representations of manliness in public discourse and self-representations by men in more private writings.

This work draws on published commentaries of all descriptions (newspapers, pamphlets, journals, parliamentary reports, advice manuals and fiction), as well as autobiographies, memoirs, diaries and correspondence, both published and unpublished. Men's journals and correspondence showed their struggles to follow the prescriptions of medical literature. Their diaries borrowed the tropes of fiction to make sense of their lives. Educational theories and practices established contradictory expectations. Conduct guides advised on social behaviour but created anxieties that were recorded in private writings. The Bible, utopian fiction and literature promoting emigration made similar promises about the benefits of emigration which men repeated in their accounts of the Australian colonies. And families, as men themselves attested, were both a reason to leave home and a reason to return. The most often articulated tension was that between men's essentially active nature and the constraining effects of a civilising and commercialising world.

The result was a restlessness in men for which adventure fiction seemed to offer a resolution. The themes of, and references to, *Robinson Crusoe* were pervasive in both published material and private writings dealing with the early Australian colonies. Rather than dismiss these statements, as has been previously done, as simply 'romantic,' this thesis suggests that Daniel Defoe's novel goes to the heart of what it meant to be a man at that time.

In embodying so many of the paradoxes of men and civilisation – the tensions between religion and secularism, individualism and community, civilisation and nature, production and consumption, the self and other – Crusoe and his adventures shine a bright light on the emerging modern Western world. The story reflected men's attempts to resolve the ambiguities inherent in shaping secure masculine identities from the tensions between traditional expectations, personal aspirations and cultural imaginings. It also gave men a seemingly possible solution for conquering the contradictions of real life. The Crusoe story is, therefore, one link in a chain of cultural mechanisms that perpetuated certain ideals of manliness and created the stubborn continuities that historians of gender come up against when we would rather be describing change.

This work is **dedicated** to the men in my life: my husband Ric Drew; my sons Daniel Livesey and Jack Livesey; all the Hedapus Boys; my father-in-law George Drew, who did not make it to the end with me, and my father Bevan Downing, the first restless man I knew. He ran away to sea with the navy at the age of eighteen and continued his travels with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, taking his family to postings all around the world.

This work would not have been completed without the unstinting assistance of my supervisory panel: the depth of knowledge and insight of Professor Ann Curthoys; the intellectual expansiveness and rigour of Dr Alexander Cook; and the conceptual clarity and exactitude of Professor Christopher E Forth, my harshest critic and greatest supporter. I have also benefited, more than they could know, from the generosity of the academic staff and the conversations and camaraderie of my fellow graduate students in the School of History, Research School of Social Sciences, at the Australian National University. **I thank them all.**

- Cover photograph by the author: Ferry, Lake Windermere, United Kingdom.

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Introduction: Being a man

From his death bed in 1814, Matthew Flinders – navigator, scientist, explorer and a founding hero for European Australians – wrote a letter. It was an order for the latest edition of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, first published in 1719. Flinders claimed that the novel had inspired him to go to sea. Seaman John Nicol had also read *Robinson Crusoe* 'many times over' and he too longed to be at sea. First Fleet surgeon George Worgan found himself inclined to ramble about shooting birds with his 'Man Friday' not long after the landing at Port Jackson. Port Phillip pioneer John Batman was as pleased with the ship that brought him to a country 'capable of supporting a future nation' as Crusoe was with the ship that rescued him. Emigrant Edward Landor was mostly ignorant about Australia, but had 'a notion that it was very much of the same character with that so long inhabited by Robinson Crusoe'.¹

We could dismiss these statements, as Flinder's biographer does, as simply 'romantic',² but the Crusoe story is so pervasive in both the published material and private writings dealing with the emerging Australian colonies at the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century that we really do need to ask what is going on. What does Daniel Defoe's novel have to do with the British discovery, exploration and settlement of Australia?

For Australian historian Alan Atkinson, the novel *Robinson Crusoe* was part of the 'deep basis of imagination' on which New South Wales was built. For British historian John Tosh, the novel is the beginning of a tradition of imperial adventure fiction which depicts a romanticised overseas world, in which pluck and guts always win through. For writer James Joyce, Crusoe is the 'true symbol of British conquest', the 'English Ulysses', his story a British version of the *Odyssey*. For literary theorist Martin Green, *Robinson Crusoe* and all the adventure tales it inspired, are 'the liturgy – the series of cultic texts – of masculinism', the name he gives to an intense male pride that emerged in seventeenth century Europe. Green argues 'that the adventure tales that formed the

¹ Paul Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders: personal letters from an extraordinary life*, Hordern House in association with the Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002, pp. 4, 26; John Nicol, *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol Mariner*, Cassell & Company, London, 1937 (1822), p. 36; George B Worgan, *Journal of a First Fleet Surgeon*, Library Council of New South Wales in association with Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1788 (1978), p. 49; John Batman, *The Settlement of John Batman in Port Phillip From His Own Journal*, George Slater, Melbourne, 1856, p. 12; Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, p. 10.

² Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders*, p. 4.

Other publications traded on the popularity of Defoe's novel: characters would be described as 'a sort of Robinson Crusoe'; and books as a 'companion to'; or as 'fascinating as', or of the 'nearest similitude' to Robinson Crusoe.⁶ Charles Rowcroft's *Tales of the Colonies*, recounting stories of Australian settlers, was applauded by reviewers for its similarity to *Robinson Crusoe*: by the sixth edition the book had been retitled *The Australian Crusoes; or The Adventures of an English Settler and his Family in the Wilds of Australia*.⁷ Even Thomas Spence, an advocate of the 'real rights of man' and denouncer of the evils of private property, appropriated Defoe in the title of his 1782 pamphlet, *A Supplement to the History of Robinson Crusoe* and Edward Wakefield Gibbon, an influential advocate of systematic colonisation, explained his theory of the importance of land to the capitalist economy by way of a dream in which he was washed up on Crusoe's island and met the man himself. Jean Jacques Rousseau made it the first book that Émile would read.⁸

A quick survey of *The Times* between 1788 and 1850 reveals that Robinson Crusoe was pervasive enough in the contemporary consciousness to provide a kind of shorthand for illustrating much of 'human' nature and the 'human' condition. But it wasn't just a literate audience that was familiar with the story: by 1788 Robinson Crusoe in pantomime form was a staple of London theatres⁹ and it was so

29 March 2008; Borrow, *Lavengro*, 1944 (1851), p. 23-24; Marta Weiss, 'Price, William Frederick Lake (1810–1896)', ODNB, online edn, Oxford University Press, Oct 2006

<<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/66904>>, accessed 29 March 2008; William Cowper, *Poems*, New, Phillips, Sampson, & Co, Boston, 1850, p. 178.

⁶ *The Times*, 6 January 1830 describing George Head, author of *Forest Scenes and Incidents in the Wilds of North America*; 20 December 1838 describing *The Voyages, Dangerous Adventures and Imminent Escapes of Captain Richard Falconer*; 24 December 1842 describing autobiography of Heinrich Stilling; 21 September 1843 describing Charles Rowcroft's *Tales of the Colonies, or the Adventures of an Emigrant*.

⁷ Charles Rowcroft, *Tales of The Colonies; Or, The Adventures of an Emigrant*, 3rd edition, London, Smith Elder & Co, 1845; Charles Rowcroft, *The Australian Crusoes; or The Adventures of an English Settler and his Family in the Wilds of Australia*, Willis P Hazard, Philadelphia, 1853 (from the 6th London edition).

⁸ HT Dickinson, 'Spence, Thomas (1750–1814)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26112>>, accessed 28 March 2008; Wakefield, Edward Gibbon, 'England & America: A Comparison of the Social and Political State of Both Nations', in MF Lloyd Prichard (ed), *The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, Collins, Glasgow and London, 1968, pp. 366-370; Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Émile*, JM Dent, London, 1974 (1762), p. 147.

⁹ *The Times*, 27 December 1836. Also at the Theatre Royal in 1788 and 1789; at Drury Lane in 1789, 1797, 1799, 1800 and 1804; as 'Juan Fernandez' at the New Royal Circus, St George's Fields in 1806; as 'Grand Ballet Pantomime' at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden in 1817; as 'The Bold Buccaneers' at Sadler's Wells in 1819; with *Ivanhoe* at the Adelphi Theatre in 1821; with *Julius Caesar* at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden in 1826; with Sheridan's 'The Rivals' at the Surrey Theatre in 1829; at the Royal Coburg Theatre in 1830 and 1832; 'to conclude' at Astley's Royal Amphitheatre in 1838; a 'new edition' at the Royal Olympic Theatre in 1842; and at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane in 1845.

light reading of Englishmen for two hundred years and more after Robinson Crusoe were, in fact, the energizing myth of English imperialism'. George Borrow, in 1851, was unequivocal about the novel's influence: 'it was a book which', he wrote, 'has exerted over the minds of Englishmen an influence certainly greater than any other of modern times... a book, moreover, to which, from the hard deeds which it narrates, and the spirit of strange and romantic enterprise which it tends to awaken, England owes many of her astonishing discoveries both by sea and land, and no inconsiderable part of her naval glory'.³ The novel is all of this and something more.

The popularity of *Robinson Crusoe* needs no exaggeration. The initial print run of the first edition at the end of April 1719 was 1000 copies. There was a second edition in May, a third in June, and a fourth shortly before the publication of the sequel in August. The two parts were published together with a map and six plates at the end of the year. By the end of the following year the book had been translated into French, German, and Dutch. *Robinson Crusoe* has never been out of print since and only the Bible has been printed in more languages.⁴

Samuel Taylor Coleridge read *Robinson Crusoe* when he was six years old. His older brother Francis read it and so did John Keats. Samuel Johnson wished it were longer. It was in Charles Dickens' father's little library and was one of the books that made up the 'glorious host' that comforted the fictional David Copperfield when life turned bleak. George Banks was a fan, though his 'inflexible Methodist' father threw his copy into the fire. George Borrow was so entranced by the illustrations in his boyhood copy that he used it to teach himself to read. It inspired historical painter Edward Ward and early experimental photographer William Lake Price. Poet William Cowper wrote the most famous line about Crusoe – 'I am monarch of all I survey'.⁵

³ Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 41; John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire*, Pearson Longman, Harlow, England, 2005, 1999, p. 199; James Joyce, 'Daniel Defoe', *Buffalo Studies*, vol. 1 (1), December, 1964, p. 3, 24-25; Martin Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, 1990, pp. 2, 3; George Borrow, *Lavengro*, JM Dent and Sons Ltd, London, 1944 (1851), p. 23-24.

⁴ Paula R Backscheider, 'Defoe, Daniel (1660?–1731)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/7421>>, accessed 29 March 2008.

⁵ Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, *Biographia Epistolaris Vol 1*, G Bell & Sons Ltd, London, 1911, p. 12; Review of Richard Monckton Milnes, *Life, Letters and Literary Remains of John Keats* in *The Times*, 19 September 1848; Michael Slater, 'Dickens, Charles John Huffam (1812–1870)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2007 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/7599>>, accessed 29 March 2008; WEA Axon, 'Banks, George Linnaeus (1821–1881)', rev. HCG Matthew, ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/1295>>, accessed

popular in Manchester in the early 1850s that it ran at the Theatre Royal for 125 consecutive nights.¹⁰

Robinson Crusoe is the story of a restless young man whose father does not understand his yearning for the sea. He tells Crusoe that adventures are either for 'men of desperate fortunes' or those with 'aspiring, superior fortunes' who wish to 'make themselves famous in undertakings of a nature out of the common road'. But Crusoe is from 'the middle state' which his father believes 'the most suited to human happiness' and the one that he was hoping for his son.¹¹ The lure of things 'out of the common road' being stronger than happiness in the 'middle state', Crusoe runs away and finds himself in many adventures with storms, wild beasts, unfamiliar places and foreign people. As the sole survivor of a shipwreck, cast away on an uninhabited island, Crusoe builds a life by his own hands, saves a 'native' boy from cannibals, and repents the actions that have brought him to this state. There are compensations to a solitary life: Crusoe is 'removed from all the wickedness of the world' with 'neither the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life' to distract him.¹² After twenty eight years another ship lands on Crusoe's island. He and his 'Man Friday' foil a mutiny, save the captain, and leave the five mutineers on the island to be joined by sixteen Spanish prisoners rescued from neighbouring cannibals. After further adventures getting home, Crusoe spends almost seven years back in England discharging family obligations: he marries, fathers three children, and educates a nephew before setting him up for a life at sea. Then he joins his nephew for another ten years of adventures, recounted in a second book.

In his resourcefulness, independence and wandering ways, Robinson Crusoe is a very similar character to the bushmen in whom Russel Ward found the origins of the 'legend' of the Australian 'character' or 'ethos'. Ward's bushmen were the semi-nomadic casual hands employed on the large properties that appeared in the interior after the crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813, men in whom, according to Ward, all the ingredients of the Australian myth (a collectivist morality, an anti-authoritarian egalitarian outlook, independence, toughness, resourcefulness and adaptability) coalesced and transmuted in the particular conditions of the interior into something

¹⁰ GC Boase, 'Payne, William Henry Schofield (1803–1878)', rev. Brenda Assael, ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2007 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21659>>, accessed 28 March 2008.

¹¹ Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, London, 1790 (1719), p. 3.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 162.

new that was more than the sum of its parts.¹³ I would like to argue that this similarity is not a coincidence. The imaginative longings and material circumstances that created such a receptive audience for the Crusoe novel also created the motivation for British men to explore and settle the Australian colonies – and the Crusoe story itself was an influence in men's actions. That Robinson Crusoe was an urban middling-class character and Ward's bushmen were rural and more working-class underscores the cross-class nature of certain ideals of manliness. As we shall see in the following chapters, *Robinson Crusoe* appeared to speak directly to the tensions and anxieties experienced by many types of men at the end of the eighteenth- and beginning of the nineteenth- centuries and proposed a solution in the potential of adventure, land and independence somewhere over the sea. As we shall also see, antipodean realities did not fulfill Crusoe-esque fantasies.

Robinson Crusoe has now entered the realm of myth. In a huge body of literature that shows no sign of slowing, his story has been mined for metaphor, allegory, insights and psychological readings on autobiography, capitalism, colonialism, individualism, kinship, linguistics, politics, post-colonialism, race relations, religion, and slavery, and the construction and preservation of the modern sense of 'self'; and this list is not exhaustive.¹⁴ Nor has the story disappeared from popular culture. One of the most recent 'Robinsonades', in a long list of the story's retellings,¹⁵ is a thirteen part NBC production screened on American televisions in 2008 (and in Australia in 2009).¹⁶

As we now understand, Crusoe is able to conquer the contradictions of life because he is fictional. But Defoe's novel, for his eighteenth and early-nineteenth century audiences, was not necessarily read as such. It was based on the experiences of real castaway Alexander Selkirk. It sat comfortably with published accounts of actual voyages and discoveries such as those by William Dampier, Edward Cooke and Woodes Rogers at the time of initial publication, James Cook later in the century and Matthew Flinders at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It echoed the philosophies of Locke and influenced the philosophies of Rousseau which were both read concurrently with Defoe's novel by late eighteenth-century men. It sounded like a

¹³ Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1987 (1958), p. 71; Eleanor Hodges, 'The Bushman Legend', in John Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush: The Australian Quest for Identity*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1982, p. 6-7.

¹⁴ The Crusoe literature reviewed for this thesis is listed under a separate heading in the bibliography.

¹⁵ For a comprehensive survey, see Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*.

¹⁶ <<http://www.nbc.com/Primetime/Crusoe/index.shtml>>, accessed 17/12/2009; endurance of the Crusoe story into the twenty-first century is also noted by Paul Arthur, *Virtual Voyages: Travel Writing and the Antipodes 1605-1837*, Anthem Press, London and New York, 2010, p. 16.

familiar Puritan conversion tale and it came vividly to life when the last living member of the *Bounty*'s mutineers was found on Pitcairn Island in 1808. Whether men followed in Crusoe's adventurous footsteps or admired him only on the page, it is not unreasonable to think that his seeming success in resolving many of the ambiguities that men found in their own lives was realistically achievable.

These ambiguities were evident but unexplored at the time. When Peter Cunningham described escaped convicts on Kangaroo Island as 'Robinson Crusoes', when ex-convict settler on Preservation Island James Munro was given an obituary by the *Hobart Town Courier* in 1845 headed 'The Tasmanian Crusoe', and when John Morgan called 'wild white man' William Buckley 'the real Crusoe' in the published account of his life with Aborigines, it is not clear whether Crusoe is being invoked to highlight a solitary life, a settler's life, or an uncivilised life.¹⁷ It is this slipperiness of usage that underlines Crusoe's success as a potent symbol – he and his story meant different things to different men, yet created a perception of a shared understanding of the character and his interactions with the world.

It is fruitful, therefore, to take time to consider the influence of a book on its male audience for three reasons. Firstly, in embodying so many of the paradoxes of men and civilisation – the tensions between religion and secularism, individualism and community, civilisation and nature, production and consumption, the self and other, and so on – Crusoe and his adventures shine a bright light on the emerging modern Western world. Secondly, the Crusoe story is revealed as one link in a chain of cultural mechanisms that perpetuate certain ideals of manliness and create the stubborn continuities that historians of gender come up against when we would rather be describing change. But the continuities are not evidence for an essential male nature and they can be explained historically. And thirdly, we solve Martin Green's puzzle of why Australia has produced so few Robinsonades. Green observes that Australian society as a whole was expected to follow the 'pattern' of the Robinson castaway experience – 'The whole idea of "mates", which so long dominated Australian experience', he writes, 'depended on two or more men being alone together under

¹⁷ Peter Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales; A Series of Letters, comprising Sketches of the Actual State of Society in That Colony; Of its Peculiar Advantages to Emigrants; Of its Topography, Natural History, &c. &c.*, vol. 1, Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1966 (1827), p. 22; Barbara Valentine, 'Munro, James (c. 1779-1845?)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/AS10364b.htm>>, accessed 8 April 2008, (also in *The Launceston Examiner*, 25 January 1845, *The Colonial Times*, 28 January 1845, *The Courier*, 30 January 1845, *The Maitland Mercury*, 15 February 1845); John Morgan, *The Life And Adventures of William Buckley...*, Archibald Macdougall, Tasmania, 1852.

desert-island conditions so that each might discover his own and the other's real self'¹⁸ – but he does not take the step of finding another recasting of the Crusoe character in Ward's articulation of the 'Australian Legend'. Perhaps this is because Ward's work was non-fiction and it was preoccupied not with a male character but with an 'Australian' character. This emphasis was an imperative in the writing of national histories to define Australian men against their British counterparts. So while Crusoe was essentially, perhaps quintessentially, 'British',¹⁹ and the bushman and the pioneer settler became 'Australian', they are all expressions of similar ideals of certain manly characteristics: an argument that is made clear through the transnational framework of this study.

The following chapters adopt a thematic approach to avoid a 'cause and effect' argument that would be implied by establishing conditions in Britain and then moving to Australia to see how men fared. Such a structure would not capture the continual movement of people between the two countries, the ongoing changes in Britain that affected men in the colonies, and vice versa, and the enduring connections of families and homosocial networks. Each of the chapters considers various ways in which Robinson Crusoe, the character or the story, both reflected and influenced men's lives during the period under discussion. Each dwells on the tensions represented and experienced in those lives. And each draws part of a picture that cumulatively goes some way to describing the cultural imaginings of the time – the mimesis of philosophies, literature, new sciences, popular culture, events and actions – that created some shared understandings of how to go about 'being a man'.

The first chapter explains perceptions of men's essential physical nature which were fundamental to the tensions explored in the following chapters. Chapter two considers men's emotional nature. Both these chapters are concerned with representations that shaped and challenged men's understanding of their physical and emotional selves, and men's responses to those representations in their more personal writings. The third chapter explores the education, in its broadest sense, of boys and young men and the restlessness it created. The fourth chapter follows them to sea, a frequent response to that restlessness. Chapter five looks closely at a more focussed form of adventure in emigration and colonisation. Chapters six and seven examine, respectively, the anxieties created by social mobility and men's ambivalent relationship with authority and the law – both issues which were brought sharply into focus in the

¹⁸ Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, p. 98.

¹⁹ Joyce, 'Daniel Defoe', pp. 24-25.

Australia colonies. The eighth chapter places men in their families from whom, no matter how far their adventures take them, they are never quite removed. Chapter nine links the ideals of manliness followed in all the chapters to notions of national identity, British and Australian. Each chapter considers links in the chain of cultural mechanisms that so often made men restless. And each chapter shows how restless men took their restlessness with them, so that the Australian colonies never were a solution to men's anxieties.

Robinson Crusoe's father, a retired merchant who had made money in trade, was 'confined by the gout' when Crusoe first raised his 'wandering inclination'. It was a common affliction. Chapter one – **Confined by the gout: perceptions of men's physical health** – describes how popular medical literature perpetuated the notion that man's physical nature was essentially active and discusses how the accoutrements of civilisation and the pitfalls of an industrialising and commercialising society were perceived as threats to that nature. British men were acutely aware of their health, and struggled to follow the prescriptions of medical literature: this is made clear in their letters and journals. Reports from Australia, both emigration literature and personal writings, explicitly described the conditions in the colonies as a solution to threats to the health of men.

The Crusoe story is as much a spiritual journey of self-discovery as an adventure story. It is full of tears and religious revelation and the journal writing that Crusoe undertakes to make sense of himself and his experiences. Chapter two – **The ecstasies and transports of the soul: emotional journeys of self discovery** – finds in men's letters, journal writings and published and unpublished memoirs similarly heightened emotions, as men negotiated the opportunities and tensions of a changing world. University tutors, radical weavers, soldiers and sailors, explorers, convicts and emigrants, all recorded their struggles and often used the tropes of fiction to make sense of their lives. Adventure in the Australian colonies may have seemed an escape from these tensions but it inevitably led to further strong emotions, those of homesickness and regret. Antipodean lives were as incoherent as those in the 'Old World'.

Chapter three – **My head filled early with rambling thoughts: raising boys and making men** – considers where and how men's restlessness in this particular period was nurtured: in new theories surrounding childhood and education, the changing forms of formal education, and the influence of popular culture. Of particular significance were debates over the benefits and dangers of the written word that

stemmed from the pedagogical intent of much fiction and non-fiction work. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* was a prime example of the confusion. The education of boys, in its broadest sense, established many of the contradictions that led to men's restless straining against their perceived chains, whether they were in Britain or in the Australian colonies.

Restless men, like Crusoe, sometimes explicitly inspired by Crusoe, ran away to sea. As an island, Britain's cultural imagination had long been associated with all things oceanic, and the sea's potential for adventure and fortune was reinforced during the eighteenth century as it facilitated prosperous trade and the expansion of an empire. Bolstered by Crusoe's castaway experience, islands and their potential for regeneration also loomed large in British imaginations. Chapter four – **Satisfied with nothing but going to sea: seafaring lives and island hopes** – examines the anomalies for men in their seafaring lives and the more hopeful redemptive promises of islands that seemed fulfilled in the fates of the *Bounty* mutineers and the convicts of the First Fleet. But on both sea and land, the rhetoric of restless adventure was maintained.

Crusoe's attempts to turn his island into a home and the detailed descriptions of his later island community in *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* belong with other utopian fictions that imagined solutions to society's ills somewhere over the seas. Chapter five – **To think that this was all my own: land, independence and emigration** – investigates the common promises for men found in utopian fiction, biblical references, popular emigration literature and formal proposals for colonisation. The aspirations for land and independence inspired by this material were at odds with the pragmatic circumstances of the early Australian colonies which were quickly constructed in the image of Britain. The goals that so motivated men were relentlessly moved.

Despite Crusoe's father's admonishments that 'the middle station of life' was the one most conducive to happiness, the exacting requirements that earned and maintained a man's place in this rank could have him looking for escape. Chapter six – **The middle station of life: the anxieties of social mobility** – proposes that increasing social mobility enabled by commercial opportunities made distinctions of 'rank', 'order', and 'class' an unsettling business. A torrent of etiquette and conduct manuals gave advice on the minutiae of social dealings and the seemingly unachievable self-control necessary for their success. The resulting uneasiness in men's pursuit of an

ambiguous independence is evident in men's writing. In the nascent Australian colonies, anxiety about a man's place in the social sphere was actually increased.

Crusoe went from cabin boy to plantation owner, from merchant to 'a miserable slave'. The risks that men took to attain autonomy made the movement between financial security and poverty, liberty and imprisonment, being on the right or wrong side of the law, very slippery. Chapter seven – **A surprising change of circumstances: men's ambivalent relationship with authority** – examines turn of the century debates around crime and punishment and men's perceived loss of autonomy in their relationship to authorities. In the Australian colonies, these issues were brought sharply into focus.

Although Defoe seems to relegate family to a minor role in *Robinson Crusoe*, chapter eight – **The centre of all my enterprises: the paradox of families** – argues that Defoe quite accurately illustrates that men's restlessness was the result of a desire to establish and maintain a family as much as a desire to escape familial obligations. Marriage and fatherhood were traditional markers of successful male adulthood and in the early nineteenth century they were central to debates about suitable settlers in the Australian colonies: yet the demographics of the colonies ensured that a man's chance of marrying was actually lower.

Chapter nine – **The English Ulysses and the Australian Legend: becoming nations, becoming men** – traces the emergence of 'metanarratives', the stories that give coherence to identities, both personal and collective. In Britain during the nineteenth century, the dominant narrative was, arguably, adventure fiction, the 'energizing myth' of British imperialism in which *Robinson Crusoe* played a pivotal role.²⁰ In Australia at the end of the nineteenth century the stories underpinning a shared sense of national identity were the 'bushman', the wandering, independent pastoral worker, and the 'pioneer', the independent settler who endured the hardships of being 'first' to tame the landscape. Both were evolutions of the Crusoe story and its ambiguities for men.

In '**Robinson Crusoe untravelled...**' we meet some of the men who were not as restless as Crusoe. Many fitted Oliver Goldsmith's gently satirical description: 'We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo: all our adventures were by the

²⁰ Martin Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire*, Basic Books Inc, New York, 1979, p. 3.

fireside, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown'.²¹ And yet the normative aspects of Crusoe-esque manliness are hard to escape. This epilogue discusses the role that language plays in creating the ambiguities and continuities in what it meant to 'be a man'.

Notions of adventure, land and independence appear and reappear throughout these chapters. 'Adventure' is an antidote to the sedentary lifestyles of civilised life in chapter one, the organising narrative for men's lives in chapter two, the solution for restless young men in chapters three and four. Working the 'land' is a counter measure for sedentary men in chapter one and a redemptive measure for poor and criminal men in chapter seven; owning 'land' is a promise of the colonies in chapter five.

'Independence', conferred by land ownership, is another promise of the colonies in chapter five; as 'autonomy' it is at the core of men's relationships with each other in chapter six, and, as 'liberty', in men's relationship with the law in chapter seven; and 'independence' is the foundation for family in chapter eight. This approach is articulated by Dror Wahrman's notion of 'resonance', the ideas and events that 'are picked up to be reproduced or mirrored or objected to or bounced around again and again'.

Wahrman's metaphor of an 'underlying cultural soundbox' captures the overlapping of themes in the following chapters better than that of links in one linear chain, but it does not do justice to the somatic effects involved in ideas of 'being a man'.²² It may help the reader, therefore, to consider each of the chapters more as interlinking rings in a chain mail shirt. This fragmented approach tends to undermine the coherence that history writing tries to apply to its subject and to some extent this is deliberate, an attempt to capture what John Brewer calls the 'flux and change' that people during this period saw rather than the 'stability, unity and order' we tend to see in retrospect.²³ And there is certainly nothing stable, unified or orderly about representations of subjectivity which is one of the central issues of this thesis.

Even a cursory glance at British history of the end of the eighteenth and first decades of the nineteenth centuries reveals that notions of chains and escapes capture much of what was felt to be going on. While the literal chains of convicts clanked in the early Australian colonies, slave chains clanked in other parts of the emerging empire. Metaphorically, men were everywhere in chains according to Rousseau, until

²¹ Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Groombridge and Sons, London, 1858, p. 2.

²² Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2004, pp. xv-xvi.

²³ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, Harper Collins, London, 1997, p. 664.

Alexis de Tocqueville claimed that democracy broke the chain and freed every link.²⁴ The fetters of the soul were broken in death,²⁵ and marriage could be described as the great moral chain which held society together.²⁶ But emigration propagandist Charles Hursthouse hoped 'to achieve a happy escape and good deliverance from that grinding, social serfdom, those effeminate chains, my born and certain lot in England'.²⁷ Perhaps the heaviest chains of all were made from the interlinking cultural mechanisms that gave men a particular idea of what it meant to be a man – Crusoe's chains.

²⁴ Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract, or Principles of Political Right*, public domain, 1762, Book 1, Chapter 1. Subject of the First Book; Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Harper & Row, New York, 1966, p. 478.

²⁵ For example Pliny Fisk, 'Letter from Mr. Fisk to the Corresponding Secretary, respecting the sickness and death of Mr. Parsons, dated Alexandria, Feb. 10, 1822', *Religious Intelligencer*, vol. VII (6), 6 July 1822, pp. 87-89.

²⁶ *The Queen's Case Stated*, quoted in Louise Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial in the Queen Caroline Affair of 1820', *Gender & History*, vol. 20 (2), August, 2008, p. 253.

²⁷ Charles Hursthouse, *New Zealand, The "Britain of the South"*, 2nd edition, London, 1861, p. 424.

Background: 'But why, you may well ask, do we need more histories of men?'

British masculinities — Australian masculinities — Masculinities in national frameworks — Masculinity in the creation of national identities — Continuity and change — Experience — Bodies — Emotions — Biographies — Creation of identities — Setting the boundaries — Notes on sources and methodology — Introducing the Australian legend — Hopes

'But why, you may well ask, do we need more histories of men?' This is the very reasonable question that Elizabeth A Foyster asks in the introduction of her history of manhood in early modern England.¹ Most of history has been, after all, *his* story, and three decades of studies of 'masculinity'² has attracted the caution that it may be 'merely fashionable refigurings of a very familiar male-dominated history'.³ The story in these pages is about 'men' but it is not about 'male domination'. It is not a political or social history, not quite a cultural history, nor is it a study of 'masculinity', yet it draws from and contributes to all of these: it covers the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, where a large amount of historical study is more comfortable dealing with one or the other; it considers both Britain and Australia, whereas, until recently, historians have found it either easier or more politic to use national frameworks; and, it looks at men's articulations of their lived experience not just at representations of masculinity. This thesis does not argue with previous histories, rather, it works in the spaces between traditional histories, studies of masculinity, and articulations of national identities and focuses its efforts on the notoriously difficult question of male subjectivity – what it meant to be a man in a particular time and place.

Few previous works have asked this question, and when they do, as James Kim does of the period at which I am looking, it is answered through close textual analysis of

¹ Elizabeth A Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage*, Longman, London, 1999, p. 2.

² See *The Men's Bibliography: A comprehensive bibliography of writing on men, masculinities, gender, and sexualities*, compiled by Michael Flood, 19th edition, 2008 <<http://mensbiblio.xyonline.net>>.

³ Kathleen Canning, *Historical Perspectives on Bodies, Class and Citizenship*, Cornell University Press, New York, 2006, p. 10; Karen Adler, Ross Blazaretti and Michele Mitchell, 'Practising Gender History', *Gender & History*, vol. 20 (1), April, 2008, pp. 2-3.

literature. 'If, as the historical scholarship so powerfully demonstrates, eighteenth-century masculinity in general and sentimental masculinity in particular was rent with contradictions and vexed by apprehensions of its own effeminacy', Kim wonders, 'then how did male subjects of the period respond to the felt inadequacy of their own gender identities? What was it like to be caught in that peculiar subjective bind, being a bourgeois man of delicate feeling? What, in short, did it feel like for men?'⁴ But while his fascinating consideration of Lawrence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, 1759, can reach some answers about the fictional protagonist, the historian cannot extrapolate these to his creator Lawrence Sterne let alone eighteenth century 'men'.

Studies of **British masculinities** in history, or histories of British masculinities, flourish. Karen Harvey and Alexandra Shepard's 2005 reviews of the history of masculinity and what historians have done with it, succinctly and eloquently cover the work of historians looking at the period between 1650 and 1800 in Britain and they acknowledge significant works like: Elizabeth Foyster's identification of the 'fragile patriarchy' prior to 1700; Phillip Carter on politeness and sensibility; Michèle Cohen on the replacement of politeness by chivalry; Margaret Hunt's account of gender and commerce in families of the 'middling sort;' and the body of work of John Tosh and Michael Roper. The range of methodological approaches in this work include: gender analysis of patriarchal relations between men and women; social historical analysis of masculinity's interaction with social status and class; psychological studies with emphasis on selfhood and subjective experience; and, the cultural history of representations of manliness and masculinity.⁵

Harvey and Shepard also identify areas not yet adequately covered like: keener differentiations in status, sorts and classes, including between rural and urban men; the role of religion; and, the relationship between war and masculinity and the naval and military contexts in which some men's masculinity was 'forged' that 'suggest limits to the hegemony of politeness'.⁶ Following Roper's observation that 'new' formations of masculinity are 'never wholly assimilated by individuals but are negotiated on the basis of earlier, often conflicting, social and cultural scripts', Harvey argues that historians of

⁴ James Kim, "'good cursed, bouncing losses': Masculinity, Sentimental Irony, and Exuberance in *Tristram Shandy*", *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 48 (1), pp. 3-24, 2007, p. 8.

⁵ Karen Harvey, 'The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 44 (2), April, 2005, pp. 296-311; Karen Harvey and Alexandra Shepard, 'What Have Historians Done with Masculinity? Reflections on Five Centuries of British History, circa 1500-1950', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 44 (2), April, 2005, pp. 274-280.

⁶ Harvey, 'History of Masculinity', p. 308.

gender, 'need to deal not just in free-floating cultural attributes, but in grounded social or psychic contexts of experience that interact with representations. Historians of masculinity', she writes, 'have yet to deliver on Tosh's request that we blaze a trail in combining the methods of cultural and social historian', or as Roper puts it, exploring how 'cultural representations become part of subjective identity'.⁷ In revealing how the *Robinson Crusoe* story resonated with men's personal struggles in the material circumstances of the turn of the nineteenth century, arguably shaping the behaviour of many men to the point that James Joyce in 1964 described Crusoe as the 'the prototype of the British colonist', in whom the 'whole Anglo-Saxon spirit could be found',⁸ this thesis contributes to the body of work on 'British' masculinities and the injunctions of some of its practitioners to study the interrelationship of 'advice and action, representation and reality', to relate self-perceptions with what was enacted.⁹

Although Martin Crotty has added to our understanding of the creation of middle-class masculine identities,¹⁰ much of the literature on **Australian masculinities** comes from journalists, family therapists and sociologists responding to men's fears in the light of post-1970's feminism. Recent historical research has looked at aspects of men's experience in arenas such as war, popular culture, gambling, sport, the labour force, on the legend of 'mateship', and as convicts (sexuality in the convict system has been spotlighted).¹¹ Not all of this work sufficiently interrogates the gendered nature of these

⁷ Harvey and Shepard, 'What Have Historians Done with Masculinity?', p. 280; Michael Roper and John Tosh, 'Introduction: Historians and the politics of masculinity', in Michael Roper and John Tosh (eds), *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800*, Routledge, London, 1991, pp. 14-15.

⁸ James Joyce, 'Daniel Defoe', *Buffalo Studies*, vol. 1 (1), pp. December, 1964, pp. 24-25.

⁹ Philip Carter, 'Men About Town: Representations of Foppery and Masculinity in Early Eighteenth-Century Urban Society', in Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (eds), *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*, Longman, London, 1997, p. 33; Stephen Heathorn, 'How Stiff Were Their Upper Lips? Research on Late-Victorian and Edwardian Masculinity', *History Compass*, vol. 2 (BI 093), 2004, p. 4.

¹⁰ Martin Crotty, *Making the Australian Male: Middle-Class Masculinity 1870-1920*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton South, 2001.

¹¹ For example, Stephen Garton, 'War and Masculinity in Twentieth Century Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 56, 1998, pp. 86-95; Rose Lucas, 'Dragging It Out: Tales of Masculinity in Australian Cinema, from Crocodile Dundee to Priscilla, Queen of the Desert', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 56, 1998, pp. 138-146; Chris McConville, '"And Don't Bet Odds-on": The Heroics and the Ruin of the Leviathan Punter' in Richard Nile and Michael Peterson (eds), *Becoming Australia*, Queensland University Press, St Lucia, 1998, pp. 93-106; Daryl Adair, John Nauright, and Murray G Phillips, 'Playing Fields Through to Battle Fields: The Development of Australian Sporting Manhood in its Imperial Context, c.1850-1918', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 56, 1998, pp. 51-67; Mark Hearn, 'Securing the Man: Narratives of Gender and Nation in the Verdicts of Henry Bourmes Higgins', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 37(127), 2006, pp. 1-24; Tim Bowden, 'Northern Exposure' in Richard Nile and Michael Peterson (eds), *Becoming Australia*, Queensland University Press, St Lucia, 1998, pp. 149-154; David Roberts, '"The valley of swells": "Special" or "Educated" Convicts on the Wellington Valley Settlement, 1827-1830', *History Australia*, vol. 3(1), 2006, pp. 11.1-11.21; 'Escape: Essays on Convict Australia', special issue –

experiences. Historians that look at masculinity often confine themselves to the second half of the nineteenth century, like Clive Moore on 'colonial manhood', or put violence and sexuality at the centre of their analysis, like Raymond Evans and Bill Thorpe in their work on masculinities and the convict system.¹² Linzie Murrie has read *The Australian Legend* in terms of its construction of a specifically Australian masculinity. He notes some of the themes pursued in the following pages, such as: men's continuing need for approval from other men; the changing meaning but continuing use of words like 'mateship;' and the similar behaviours and ideals of the urban writers (like roaming, drinking, sexual indulgence and avoidance of marriage) and the 'bushmen' whom they romanticised in the 1890s. Murrie sees these bohemians as grappling 'for the masculine legitimacy they see bestowed by "the Bush"', but he does not note the long history of this perception or its foregrounding a hundred years earlier when British commentators debated a similar city/rural divide and its significance for men.¹³

There are some works that place **masculinities in national frameworks**, such as Michael Kimmel's *Manhood in America*, 1996, and Jock Phillips' work on New Zealand, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male: A History*, 1987. Both cover the time periods from the arrival of white men in their respective countries to the twentieth century, both focus on the 'origin and nature' of stereotypes, 'the history of the image',¹⁴ about what men were 'told they were *supposed* to do, feel, and think and what happened in response to those prescriptions'.¹⁵ Both start from the conviction that 'the current malaise among men has a long history',¹⁶ and that there is a high personal cost to men of the male stereotype.¹⁷ Nothing as comprehensive as these studies has been undertaken for other settler societies like Canada, South Africa and Australia. And this project does not aim for that coverage. However, it does contribute to the growing body of work on 'Australian' masculinities by looking closely at the earlier colonial period, when culture was arguably shared with Britain, and demonstrating that

Journal of Australian Colonial History, vol. 7, 2005; Raymond Evans and Bill Thorpe, 'Commanding Men: Masculinities and the Convict System', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 56, 1998, pp. 17-34.

¹² Raymond Evans and Bill Thorpe, 'Commanding Men: Masculinities and the Convict System', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. (56), 1998, pp. 17-34; Clive Moore, 'Colonial Manhood and Masculinities', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. (56), 1998, pp. 35-50.

¹³ Linzie Murrie, 'The Australian Legend: Writing Australian Masculinity/Writing 'Australian' Masculine', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. (56), 1998, pp. 71-74.

¹⁴ Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male: A History*, Penguin Books, Auckland, 1987, pp. vii, viii.

¹⁵ Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, The Free Press, New York, 1996, p. 10.

¹⁶ Michael Kimmel, 'Consuming Manhood: The Feminization of American Culture and the Recreation of the Male Body, 1832-1920', *Michigan Quarterly Review*, vol. (33), Winter, 1994, p. viii.

¹⁷ Phillips, *A Man's Country?*, pp. 288-289.

a national masculinity, a difference between 'Australian' and 'British' men, is as illusory as a national identity, as elusive as any identity at all.

Works that consider **masculinity, or gender, in the creation of national identities** usually come from a feminist perspective. In this field is *Gendering European History* by Barbara Caine and Glenda Sluga who make gender and citizenship central to their exploration of identity, work, home and politics in national contexts across Europe.¹⁸ Fewer such studies specifically consider masculinity in terms of Australian nation-building or national identity, despite Patricia Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartly's attempt in *Creating a Nation: 1788-1994*, 1994, to tell a national story that includes women, indigenous peoples and men as gendered beings. Few have followed its authors' lead.¹⁹ John Hirst was a critic of this work, failing to grasp the usefulness of a concept like 'gender' in national stories when 'Defining the nation, ruling the nation and defending the nation have been done mostly by men'.²⁰ Because he cannot see men as gendered beings, Hirst, misses the point that their dominance in the national story necessarily places masculinity in a key role in national identity.

This thesis goes further than acknowledging that role. It proposes that Ward's *The Australian Legend* which has been influential in notions of the 'Australian character' is a rewriting of Crusoe's so-called 'British' characteristics, suggesting that national differences, like nations, are imagined. The '**transnational**' framework of the thesis, which moves backwards and forwards between Britain and Australia, reveals this suggestion. I acknowledge that it is anachronistic to speak of 'Australia' in the first decades of the nineteenth century as a 'nation' (and I use the more accurate term 'Australian colonies' in the pages that follow), but I use the term 'transnational' in the way that it captures 'a turning away from the nation as the basic organising category for historical scholarship'.²¹

¹⁸ Barbara Caine and Glenda Sluga, *Gendering European History*, Leicester University Press, London and New York, 2000.

¹⁹ Patricia Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartly, *Creating a Nation*, McPhee Gribble, Ringwood, 1994; Joy Damousi, 'Writing Gender into History and History in Gender: *Creating A Nation* and Australian Historiography', *Gender & History*, vol. 11 (3), November, 1999, pp. 620-621.

²⁰ Damousi, 'Writing Gender into History', p. 616.

²¹ Ann Curthoys, 'History and Identity', in W Hudson and G Bolton (eds), *Creating Australia: Changing Australian History*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, 1997, p. 142; Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake, 'Introduction', in Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake (eds), *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective*, ANU E Press, Canberra, 2005, p. 5; Catherine Hall, 'Introduction: Thinking the Postcolonial, Thinking the Empire', in Catherine Hall (ed), *Cultures of Empire: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. A Reader*, Routledge, New York, 2000, p. 3.

Identifying the link between the 'English Ulysses'²² and 'The Australian Legend' goes some way to exposing the mechanisms by which ideals of masculinity are perpetuated. Foyster, like many historians of gender, argues for the peculiarity of her observations to seventeenth-century England but, as she admits, the story that emerges 'often appears as one of **continuity rather than change**'. John Tosh has highlighted household authority as an example of 'enduring masculinity', and notions of self-discipline and a certain 'roughness' (often peculiarly English) were not superseded during the eighteenth-century rise of politeness.²³ Continuity in representations of certain male archetypes and behaviours have been traced: Roger Bartra describes the 'long historical chain' that creates the enduring myth of the 'wild man'; Peter Clark reveals the pre-industrial origins of homosocial clubs, societies and associations; and Allen J Frantzen, Mark Girouard and Tim Fulford explain the persistence of the notion of chivalry.²⁴ Continuity and change need not be viewed as 'mutually exclusive', as Anders Schinkel explains, 'they are complementary aspects of reality'. It is difficult however, 'to give equal attention to the static and to the changing in history', especially now, when change 'seems to dominate, and stability appears to be something from the past'.²⁵ Trying to keep both continuity and change in focus, if not with equal attention, is something I try to achieve in this work.

Continuity is as much a result of **language** as it is of behaviour. For example, nineteenth-century middle class men gained 'household authority' by virtue of their economic status as breadwinner: this was not the case for the labouring classes yet, in the twentieth century, they used this notion of 'household authority' as a 'right of men' to justify claims for wages that would support a family.²⁶ Similarly, 'self-discipline' can

²² Joyce, 'Daniel Defoe', p. 3.

²³ Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage*, pp. 208, 213; John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire*, Pearson Longman, Harlow, England, 2005, pp. 66-67; Harvey, 'History of Masculinity', pp. 310, 311.

²⁴ Roger Bartra, *The Artificial Savage: Modern Myths of the Wild Man*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1997, p. 220; Roger Bartra, *Wild Men in the Looking Glass: The Mythic Origins of European Otherness*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1994; Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2000; Allen J Frantzen, *Bloody Good: Chivalry, Sacrifice, and the Great War*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1989; Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1981; Tim Fulford, *Romanticism and Masculinity: Gender, Politics and Poetics in the Writings of Burke, Coleridge, Cobbett, Wordsworth, De Quincy and Hazlitt*, Palgrave, New York, 1999.

²⁵ Anders Schinkel, 'Imagination as a Category of History: An Essay Concerning Kosselleck's Concepts of *Erfahrungsraum* and *Erwartungshorizont*', *History and Theory*, vol. 44, February, 2005, pp. 52, 53.

²⁶ For a discussion of this see Marilyn Lake, 'Translating needs into rights: the discursive imperative of the Australian white man, 1901-30', in Stefan Dudink, Hagemann, Karen and Tosh, John (ed), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2004.

cover ideals and behaviours as disparate as a medieval monk's asceticism, an early eighteenth-century aristocrat dueling with swords rather than fists, and a twenty-first century biker being 'kind to women, children and animals'.²⁷ As John Stuart Mill put it, 'Mankind have [sic] many ideas, and but few words'. The number of our words is limited while the contents that might be expressed by them – ideas, people, objects, possibilities, realities – are potentially unlimited. Syntax and semantics, too, are limited and this, argues Reinhart Koselleck, accounts for the 'enduring stability' that language creates.²⁸

Scholarly works on the formation of identities often lose sight of the actual people for whom those identities are relevant – issues of subjectivity become strangely distanced from the subject. This has not been helped by the contested place of 'experience' as the object of historical study. I have been guided in this work by Joan W Scott's influential 1991 article, 'The Evidence of Experience' to consider the 'constructed nature of experience.' I do not use men's reported 'experience' as evidence of any 'thing', rather I look for the explanations of why they would report a particular experience, or report that experience in the way that they do. This necessarily acknowledges the 'productive quality of discourse' and the 'discursive nature' of 'experience' whereby language and 'experience' cannot be treated separately.²⁹ Although Scott urges historians to such an approach because she is interested in 'difference' and 'change',³⁰ I am interested in the ways in which language and 'experience' also work to create illusions of sameness (shared understandings of what it means to 'be a man') and continuity (the ongoing injunction to 'be a man').

Unfortunately, talking of the discursive nature of experience risks denying the materiality of **bodies**: identities may be 'fashioned in the imagination' but they are 'lived out in the flesh'.³¹ As Connell points out, '[b]odies, in their own right as bodies, do matter. They age, get sick, enjoy, engender, give birth. There is an irreducible bodily dimension in experience and practice; the sweat cannot be excluded'. However, even

²⁷ Bandidos Veterans of Vietnam Hawaii chapter website <<http://vovma.org/hi.html>>, accessed 24/2/2010.

²⁸ John Stuart Mill, 'Use and Abuse of Political Terms', in John M Robson (ed), *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XVIII – Essays on Politics and Society Part I*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1977 (1832); Reinhart Koselleck, 'Linguistic Change and the History of Events', *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 61 (4), December, 1989, p. 657.

²⁹ Joan W Scott, 'The Evidence of Experience', *Critical Enquiry*, vol. 17 (4), Summer, 1991, p. 779-780, 793, 797.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 797.

³¹ Quoting Graham Dawson: Mary Poovey, 'Exploring Masculinities', *Victorian Studies*, vol. 36 (2), Winter, 1993, p. 225-226.

bodies, 'what happens in and to them', are to 'a large degree', says Roy Porter, 'mediated through maps and expectations derived from the culture at large'.³² I have made men's bodies and physical constitutions – how they were represented and discussed and how the experience of those bodies were reported by individual men – the starting point of this thesis. **Emotions** too are central to 'experience' and 'mediated through maps and expectations derived from the culture at large', and I cover this early in the following chapters.

Biographies, exploring, as they do, how personality is 'formed through lived experience and the emotional responses to those experiences'³³ tend to deal more fully with bodily and emotional experience than other modes of history. They can reveal personal struggles in the face of changing representations of manliness, 'the complex adaptations' that men make in the face of their changing times,³⁴ foregrounding the tensions 'between prescription and practice'.³⁵ But biographies make these struggles unique to the individual. This thesis, however, uses many of the biographer's sources and methodologies to reveal shared meanings of 'being a man' (along the lines of RW Connell's notion that masculinity is 'extended in the world, merged in organized social relations', not merely personal identity³⁶) while always being aware that the men under discussion lived and breathed. Considering the reports of individual men alongside cultural discourse as I do in this thesis will, hopefully, avoid the 'curiously detached' feel that John Tosh has noted in many cultural histories'. I try to leave the sweat and the tears in the analysis.³⁷

Many historians do not even agree that the **creation of identities** is a viable object of history. Alan Atkinson is one who sees issues of 'identity' as a 'blunt instrument for historians', yet the first two volumes of a planned three volume series that he describes as 'a history of common imagination in Australia' has been more influential in my work

³² Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason*, WW Norton & Company, New York, 2004, pp. 44-45.

³³ Michael Roper, 'Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 59, 2005, pp. 65-66.

³⁴ David Glover, 'Fluid Masculinities', *Gender & History*, vol. 14 (2), August, 2002, pp. 347, 349; Roper, 'Slipping Out of View', pp. 65-66.

³⁵ Konstantin Dierks, 'Men's History, Gender History, or Cultural History?' *Gender & History*, vol. 14 (1), April, 2002, p. 148.

³⁶ Connell, *Masculinities*, pp. 29, 39.

³⁷ Roper, 'Slipping Out of View', pp. 61-62; John Tosh, 'Hegemonic Masculinity and the History of Gender', in Stefan Dudink, Hagemann, Karen and Tosh, John (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2004, p. 52.

than the number of citations to his books would indicate.³⁸ I would argue against Atkinson that 'there was a powerful consensus, with minor variations, about the best type of manhood' among early nineteenth-century Europeans,³⁹ but I was inspired by his intricately painted picture of the complex web of relationships re-negotiated in an unfamiliar landscape through both 'talk' and 'writing', in which the aim of Europeans' 'kaleidoscope of ambitions' was, in many cases, 'to start anew'.⁴⁰ As Wilfred Prest writes in his review of Atkinson's second volume, no future writer on this period of history will be able to ignore this work, and I do not.⁴¹ I also owe a, perhaps unexpected, debt to Manning Clark who remarked that *The Times* saw potential in the Australian colonies to 'produce apparently miraculous effects amongst a people who came from a society worn with age and decrepitude, or debilitated by the indolence and apathy of modern luxury and refinement'. His denial that this could have motivated the architects of settlement or the settlers themselves confirmed that this was something worth investigating.⁴² As Stephen Garton has so rightly maintained, 'masculinity and manliness still retain the capacity to illuminate the past' no matter how much its opponents ignore it or its proponents 'manhandle' it.⁴³ Finally, Christopher E Forth's probing of 'the durable and entrenched' tensions between masculinity and modernity was the starting point for my guiding questions. How did men themselves describe these tensions? What did it mean, therefore, to 'be a man'?⁴⁴

Setting the boundaries

To begin with, I would like to **clarify my use of the term 'civilisation'**. I use 'civilisation' in the sense that Jean Starobinski describes as having gained acceptance by the end of the eighteenth century: a unifying concept that drew together diverse social changes such as improvements in comfort, advances in education, politer

³⁸ Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: a History. Volume 2 – Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2004, p. xviii.

³⁹ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 2*, p. 49.

⁴⁰ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, p. 344.

⁴¹ Wilfred Prest, 'Review of Alan Atkinson's *Democracy*', *History Australia*, vol. 2 (2), 2005, pp. 55-1–55-3.

⁴² *The Times*, 2 October 1807; Manning Clark, *A History of Australia, Vol 1: From the Earliest Times to the Age of Macquarie*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1999 (1962), p. 203.

⁴³ Stephen Garton, 'Manhandled: Battle Lines in Manliness and Masculinity (Thematic Review)', *Gender & History*, vol. 20 (2), August, 2008, p. 420.

⁴⁴ Christopher E Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West: Gender, Civilization and the Body*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, New York, 2008, p. 237.

manners, cultivation of the arts and sciences, growth of commerce and industry, and the acquisition of material goods and luxuries, in a way that established an antithesis between civilisation and a hypothetical primordial state called nature or savagery or barbarism.⁴⁵ Civilisation's critics identified a further point on the continuum from savagery through civilisation, to an overly-civilised state of effeminacy, the result of a surrender to luxury, as undesirable as barbarism.

The nexus of luxury, effeminacy and the nation at the end of the eighteenth century has been well-covered in historical literature. Historian Paul Langford says that a 'history of luxury and attitudes to luxury would come very close to being a history of the eighteenth century'.⁴⁶ Also well-served by historians is the plight of the working classes in the first half of the nineteenth century, covered first in Edwin Chadwick's 1842 report on the sanitary condition of the labouring population of Great Britain. What has not been explained is the switch by contemporary commentators from concern about upper class bodies (those who could afford luxuries and comfort) to labouring bodies (those employed in the manufacture of luxuries and comforts) but the male bodies of both groups were described as enfeebled and effeminate.⁴⁷ And in both cases service in, or emigration to, the edges of the empire was seen as a solution.

This leads me to treat civilisation and industrialisation as facets of a material progress that was perceived as having detrimental effects for both those men enjoying its benefits and those men providing them, not to mention the growing numbers of men that were subject to both. Therefore, I use the term 'civilisation' as something of a basket word, to carry all the different components of the changing material world between about 1750 and 1850, although I acknowledge that this use does not do justice to the significance of the term 'civilisation', as Brett Bowden has done, as a concept that is used to both describe and shape reality, a concept at the heart not only of imperialism, but of western conceptualisations of history itself.⁴⁸

There are some characteristic features of studies of masculinity and gender with which I have chosen not to engage. Firstly, I do not enter the debate on '**separate spheres**',

⁴⁵ Jean Starobinski, *Blessings in Disguise; or, The Morality of Evil*, Arthur Goldhammer (trans), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1993, pp. 3-5.

⁴⁶ Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, p. 3.

⁴⁷ Sean Quinlan observes a similar course in France and examines the role of medical professionals in Sean M Quinlan, *The Great Nation in Decline: Sex, Modernity, and Health Crises in Revolutionary France c. 1750-1850*, Ashgate, Aldershot and Burlington, 2007.

⁴⁸ Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and New York, 2009.

about when and whether men became 'domesticated' or flew from domestication. As Martin Francis reiterates '[m]en constantly travelled back and forth across the frontier of domesticity, if only in the realm of imagination'.⁴⁹ '[F]or men', explains John Tosh, 'domesticity and homosociality were inherently in a state of tension, because they answered to different needs. It is a misreading of "separate spheres" to see this situation as aberrant... The point is rather that men operated at will in both spheres'.⁵⁰ My research supports this view, confirming Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall's conclusion that so-called 'autonomous' men were always 'embedded in families'.⁵¹

Secondly, I have followed other recent histories in acknowledging that **male gender identity was constructed in relation to other men, not just in relation to women**. That women appear to play a peripheral role in the following pages is in no way a denial of the importance that power over women had in the formation of men's identities and in their lives.⁵² Similarly, **violence**, to women or other men, is not central to my discussion though this does not deny how very real aggression was. Issues of power and violence understandably characterise much of masculinity studies but I have chosen to treat them as two facets of more multi-faceted representations and experiences of manliness.

A third recurring theme in studies of masculinity that I do not pursue is that of '**crisis**'. Forth persuasively argues that notions of a 'crisis of masculinity' are founded 'upon the central paradoxes of modernity' and are, therefore, 'a recurring, even structural feature of life in our world'.⁵³ Moreover, Reinhart Koselleck, is convincing in his discussion of the etymology and usage of the term that 'the concept of crisis can generalize the modern experience to such an extent that "crisis" becomes a permanent concept of "history"'.⁵⁴ From the nineteenth century on, Koselleck argues, the vast expansion of meanings attached to the term 'crisis' have given us 'few gains in either clarity or

⁴⁹ Martin Francis, 'The Domestication of the Male? Recent Research on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Masculinity', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 45 (3), 2002, p. 646; Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West*, p. 168.

⁵⁰ Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, p. 71.

⁵¹ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, Routledge, London, 2002, p. xvi.

⁵² Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800*, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, England, 2001, p. 5; Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 3; Adler, et al, 'Practising Gender History', pp. 2-3.

⁵³ Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West*, p. 15.

⁵⁴ Reinhart Koselleck, 'Crisis', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 67 (2), April, 2006, p. 371.

precision' and he urges scholars 'to weigh the concept carefully before adopting it in their own terminology'.⁵⁵

The final, perhaps glaring, omission from these pages is any discussion of **sexuality**. This decision was predicated on an absence in my primary sources – much of the medical literature does not obsess about onanism, conduct literature does not usually cover sexual etiquette, and men's self writing is more often than not discreet about sexual relations – but also because sexuality during the period I am discussing is itself a complex historiographical issue and deserves more attention than I could give it in this project.⁵⁶

A few things need to be said about my **choice of period, 1788 to the 1840s**. The start date serves only to announce that I am discussing the British in the Australian colonies and their contemporaries at home. The following fifty years covers, among so much, the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, post-war economic slump, agitation for social reform, increasing industrialisation, rising unemployment, the Act of Union in 1800 which added Ireland to Great Britain, the First Reform Act in 1832, the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833, the New Poor Law in 1834, and the social, political and economic upheavals entailed in such events. 'In 1832', Mary Poovey tells us, 'the viability of the factory system and the utility of machinery were still very much in question; the extent of religious toleration and the nature of political representation had just been fiercely contested; and the viability of class society was a question of considerable debate', and, Poovey continues, '[t]hings were by no means settled by 1842'.⁵⁷ There was also, as historians such as Linda Colley have described, a growing sense of national identity in Britain.⁵⁸

Meanwhile in the Australian colonies, settlements were established in New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania), Western Australia, the area now known as Victoria, South Australia, and Moreton Bay. The trickle of free emigrants into the 1820s became a torrent in the 1830s, and more English emigrants chose Australia in

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 397-400.

⁵⁶ For a discussion see Karen Harvey, 'The Century of Sex? Gender, Bodies, and Sexuality in the Long Eighteenth Century', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 45 (4), 2002, pp. 899-916.

⁵⁷ Mary Poovey, *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation 1830-1864*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1995, p. 78.

⁵⁸ Linda Colley, 'Whose Nation? Class and National Consciousness in Britain 1750-1830', *Past & Present*, vol. 113, November, 1986, pp. 97-117.

preference to America in the late 1830s and early 1840s.⁵⁹ In 1842 Australia's economy experienced its first depression, gold was discovered in 1851, the non-indigenous population doubled in the following decade, and responsible government was rolled out during this time. When Brisbane became a free settlement in 1842, opening up Queensland's north, the almost homogenous representation of Australia's climate could not be sustained. Queensland was caught up in discourses on the enervating and degenerating effects of tropical climates. These changes from the 1840s onwards determined the end date of my study: they add nuances to my argument which the scope of this work cannot adequately cover.

The period itself is historiographically interesting. It is depicted as a time of transition between an old England of predominantly rural attitudes, and a new England of accelerating industrialisation; or as a plateau of aesthetic style and taste and tolerant sexuality before the onset of the moral and social seriousness of the Victorian period; or as GM Young colourfully described it in the 1930s, as moving from 'humbug' to 'humdrum'.⁶⁰ Words like 'disorder', 'discontent' and 'uncertainty' are used. And 1815 is treated like some pivot point in a seemingly discernible period between around the 1780s to the 1860s variously described as an age of 'reform', or of 'improvement' or of the 'forging of the modern state'.⁶¹ In such works, the eighteenth century might last until 1815, but the nineteenth century often doesn't begin until 1830 and the events of the period labeled the 'Regency' might be categorised as belonging to one century or the other, or to neither.

Restricting the **geographical location** of this story to Britain and Australia no way implies that this story is exclusive to these regions of the world. There is ample evidence that the argument I make in the following pages could also be made for other

⁵⁹ Janet Doust, *English Migrants to Eastern Australia 1815-1860*, PhD Thesis, The Australian National University, 2004, p. 26.

⁶⁰ Muriel Jaeger, *Before Victoria*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1956, p. 176, 198; GM Young, *Portrait of an Age: Victorian England*, annotated edition by George Kitson Clark, Oxford University Press, London, 1977 (1936), p. 48; AB Webster, *Joshua Watson: The Story of a Layman 1771-1855*, SPCK, London, 1954, p. 31.

⁶¹ For example: David Eastwood, 'The Age of Uncertainty: Britain in the Early-Nineteenth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol. 8, 1998, pp. 91-115; RJ White, *Waterloo to Peterloo*, Peregrine Books, 1968; Ben Wilson, *The Making of Victorian Values: Decency and Dissent in Britain, 1789-1837*, Penguin Press, New York, 2007, p. xiii; Frank Ongley Darvall, *Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England*, Oxford University Press, London, 1934, p. 343; Deidre Shauna Lynch, 'Introduction', Jane Austen, *Persuasion*, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008 (1818), p. x.

British settler colonies.⁶² Thomas Pringle, British emigrant to the Cape in 1820 and often called the father of South African poetry, reiterates man's search for 'freedom, and joy, and pride', and for himself somewhere far from the 'oppression, corruption, and strife' of civilised life in a place where 'Man is distant, but God is near'. 'Afar in the Desert I love to ride', wrote Pringle in 1832, 'With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side'.⁶³ In Canada Mrs Traill wrote 'We begin to get reconciled to our Robinson Crusoe sort of life'. She also wrote a children's novel, *The Canadian Crusoes*. These two are part of a body of work which has led to the suggestion that Crusoe is the central fable in much English-Canadian literature.⁶⁴ Historian Jonathan Rose describes Ebenezer Elliott, the foundryman and 'Corn-Law Rhymer', as just one of many who yearned for America, partly inspired by 'Crusoe-notions of self-dependence and isolation'.⁶⁵

Some Crusoe scholars go as far as describing 'the United States a sister nation to Crusoe's island', America's founders having brought to life the political philosophies of John Locke, which was the thought experiment Defoe made in his novel.⁶⁶ American novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne perpetuated the restlessness of the Crusoe figure (and all the restless men before him) when he paraphrased Blaise Pascal that 'The world owes all its onward impulses to men ill at ease'. Historian Charlotte Erickson concluded that English immigrants to America in the early decades of the nineteenth century preferred rural states to settled coastal regions, seemingly chasing an agrarian myth and seeking independence rather than working for an employer. And David Leverenz eloquently charts the history of the 'real man' myth in America, from James Fenimore Cooper's protagonist Natty Bumpo and his Native-American sidekick Chingachgook (arguably a Crusoe and Friday rewriting) through historian Frederick Jackson Turner's 'frontier thesis' (in which a new man, an American, is both savage and civilised, no longer burdened by class-linked European manners), the life and writings of Theodore

⁶² Robert D Grant finds similarities in his study of South Africa, Canada, New Zealand and Australia: Grant, *Representations of British Emigration, Colonisation and Settlement: Imagining Empire, 1800-1860*, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, 2005.

⁶³ David Finkelstein, 'Pringle, Thomas (1789–1834)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, May 2009 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/22807>>, accessed 22 March 2010; Thomas Pringle, *The Poetical Works of Thomas Pringle, With A Sketch of His Life, By Leitch Ritchie*, Edward Moxon, London, 1837, pp. 8-11.

⁶⁴ TD MacLulich, 'Crusoe in the Backwoods: A Canadian Fable?' *Mosaic*, vol. 9 (2), Winter, 1976, p. 116.

⁶⁵ Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, Yale University Press, London, 2001, p. 108.

⁶⁶ Brian C Cooney, 'Considering Robinson Crusoe's "Liberty of Conscience" in an Age of Terror', *College English*, vol. 69 (3), January, 2007, p. 197; IA Bell, 'King Crusoe: Locke's Political Theory in *Robinson Crusoe*', *English Studies*, vol. 69 (1), February, 1988, pp. 27-36; for the reception of Rousseau's *Emile* and the writings of Daniel Defoe in the colonies, see Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution Against Patriarchal Authority, 1750-1800*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1982.

Roosevelt ('the man who most successfully exploited the myth of the cross-class beast-man'), and Tarzan of the Apes (part chivalric aristocrat, part African monkey), to Bruce Wayne/Batman (brutal dominance with civilised self-control.)⁶⁷

Leverenz's history charts the continuity of ideologies of manhood functioning 'primarily in relation to the gaze of male peers and male authority', the redemptive powers of 'nature' on civilised or overly-civilised men, and the ongoing 'ambivalence about the power of the female body' which simultaneously 'saps the strength yet girds up the loins of these Last Real Men'. But Leverenz also draws out changes such as increasing homophobia, a move from a generalised concern over 'effete, feminized urbanity' to a 'rejection of high-society manners', and a moving focus where the 'nostalgic mourning' for a golden age of 'pre-capitalist patriarchy' disappears against a 'faceless and impotent' urban civilisation in which class no longer holds the ability to 'empower any sense of self'. Overall the 'myth of American manhood' was a man who was both 'civilized and savage'.⁶⁸ As the following pages show, however, such a balance is not a product of a particular national identity, rather it is the idealised but unachievable aim of modern man.

Similarly, focussing on men in no way implies that **women** are excluded from this story, or that their relationship to civilisation was less fraught. In being clear that this is a story about 'being a man' I am saying that 'being a woman' is different. In maintaining focus I reinforce the gendered nature of cultural, social and political discourses and the experience of material circumstances. However, the differences are accompanied by many similarities. Medical literature, for example, placed the same emphasis on 'regular and natural habits of life' and avoidance of 'modern abominations' for women as for men, but the climate of mainland Australia, so lauded for men, was said to be 'too dry and parching' for the fair British rose.⁶⁹ Conduct literature specifically for girls

⁶⁷ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables*, Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, Boston, 1851, p. 330; Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England: Essays on British Emigration in the Nineteenth Century*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1994; Doust, *English Migrants*, pp. 60-61; David Leverenz, 'The Last Real Man in America: From Natty Bumppo to Batman', *American Literary History*, vol. 3 (4), Winter, 1991, pp. 753-781.

⁶⁸ Leverenz, 'The Last Real Man in America', pp. 753-781. There was no perceived need in the first half of the nineteenth century, by author or reader, for a leading lady to secure Bumppo's heterosexuality, but twentieth century audiences were suspicious of Robin's relationship with Batman.

⁶⁹ Patrick Matthew, *Emigration Fields. North America, The Cape, Australia and New Zealand, Describing These Countries, And Giving a Comparative View of the Advantages They Present to the British Settlers*, Adam and Charles Black; Longman, Orme, Brown, Green and Longmans, Edinburgh, London, 1839, p. 221.

promoted, as it did for boys, a '*duty* of self-improvement', and cautioned, as it did for boys, against dishonesty and dissimilitude.⁷⁰

Although advice to young ladies focused on domestic matters, it was as daunting in its attention to minutiae, and as unrealistic in its possibility of achievement, as any guide to being a gentleman. And this type of advice was not just the province of published guides, it passed between women personally. 'Maria!' exclaimed A British woman to her goddaughter in New South Wales, 'Always have napkins at table for a party, & the wine should be on table in small decanter to save trouble to servants – Wine Cooler & Tumbler for every person – so each will drink out of their own glass'. Maria was reassured, as young men were, that 'if you once get into good habits, they will become easy & agreeable'.⁷¹ Linda Young concludes that the 'extreme self-control necessary to be (or seem) perfect is difficult to learn and a hard state in which to live, specially when masked with the required air of naturalness' leaving nineteenth-century women in constant 'danger of falling off the pedestal'.⁷² I say the same of the men in the following pages.

The Australian colonies posed peculiar problems and potentials for British women: it would be worth wondering how new lives in the antipodes affected women's sense of themselves as 'women'. In the early decades they were vastly outnumbered by men, but were proportionally represented in the buying, selling, renting and use of houses for commercial purposes in the early days of Sydney.⁷³ When serious attempts were made to correct this sexual imbalance, health and high wages were used to lure some 3000 single women from Ireland and England emigrated to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land between 1832 and 1836⁷⁴ – but, Alan Atkinson tells us, the assumption

⁷⁰ Mary Ann Hedge, *Letters on History, Addressed to a Beloved God-Child, in Two Parts*, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, London, 1819/1820, p. 1; Mary Ann Hedge, *The Flatterer; Or, False Friendship. A Tale*, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, London, 1822.

⁷¹ Undated letter, but around 1812, to Maria Macarthur by 'Mrs E', probably Maria's godmother, to help her in the management of her household at the Vineyard near Parramatta in New South Wales, in Joanna Gordan (ed), *Advice to a Young Lady in the Colonies*, Greenhouse, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 42-52.

⁷² Linda Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century: America, Australia and Britain*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, 2003, p. 192.

⁷³ Paula J Byrne, 'A Colonial Female Economy: Sydney, Australia', *Social History*, vol. 24 (3), 1999, pp. 287-293.

⁷⁴ 'Single Women and Widows of good Character', exclaimed posters, 'from 15 to 30 Years of Age, desirous of bettering their Condition by Emigrating to that healthy and highly prosperous Colony, where the number of Females compared with the entire Population is greatly deficient, and where consequently from the great demand for Servants, and other Female Employments, the Wages are comparatively high, may obtain a Passage'. Ref Par/29/37/13, 1832-1836, WSRO, 'Parish records', 1820-; A James Hammerton, *Emigrant Gentlewomen: Genteel Poverty and Female Emigration 1830-1914*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1979, p. 54.

that women would work out of doors (the labour that the colonial economy needed), was frustrated by women's new aspirations to respectability.⁷⁵

Did women themselves accept the widespread notions of women's civilising influence, finding a 'certain exaltation' in doing their duty?⁷⁶ Did emigrant women take with them the characteristics Amanda Vickery found among gentlemen's daughters, the 'upright strength, stoical fortitude and self-command',⁷⁷ using their gentility to sustain and guide them in an unfamiliar environment?⁷⁸ Did these women face a quandary in doing their duty, '[f]or, if woman's place is in the home and home is in England, isn't woman's place in England?'⁷⁹ Or did some women, as James A Hammerton has suggested, seek out colonial opportunities for 'activity and independence'? 'It may well be', he writes, 'that the women who turned to emigration were an exceptional minority rather than the tip of a social iceberg, but the rapidity with which they took advantage of such a hazardous and ill-promoted prospect suggests something beyond adventurous eccentricity'.⁸⁰ Was Charlotte Wyndham unusual when she wrote to her brother George Wyndham in New South Wales, 'Were I a man I know I should soon follow your active example'.⁸¹ Was Annie Baxter the only woman who saw her self as something of a Crusoe? 'How I would like to live here', she wrote, 'with my horse, my dog, & a black boy to shoot & fish for me!!'⁸² Regrettably such questions are beyond the scope of this project.

⁷⁵ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 2*, p. 147.

⁷⁶ Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1998, p. 8.

⁷⁷ Ilse Vickers, *Defoe and the New Sciences*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, p. 8.

⁷⁸ Emma Curtin, 'Gentility Afloat: Gentlewomen's Diaries and the Voyage to Australia, 1830-80', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 26 (105), 1995, p. 651.

⁷⁹ Diana C Archibald, 'Angel in the Bush: Exporting Domesticity through Female Emigration', in Rita S Krandis (ed), *Imperial Objects: Essays on Victorian Women's Emigration and the Unauthorized Imperial Experience*, Twayne Publishers (Simon & Schuster Macmillan), New York, 1998, p. 229.

⁸⁰ Hammerton, *Emigrant Gentlewomen*, p. 66.

⁸¹ Charlotte Wyndham to George Wyndham, 8 October 1830, Extracts from Dinton-Dalwood letters, 1827-1853, prepared by and with foreword by Dorothy Edith Wilkinson 1964, ML, MSS 1657, CY 3815.

⁸² Quoted in Lucy Frost, *No Place for a Nervous Lady: Voices From the Australian Bush*, Mcphee Gribble/Penguin Books, Fitzroy, Vic, 1984, p. 103.

Notes on sources and methodology

Most of the sources used in this work have been well-covered by historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Newspapers, pamphlets, chap books, journals, published commentaries of all descriptions, parliamentary reports, fiction and non-fiction, have yielded answers to the myriad questions which historians bring to their material. Autobiographies, diaries and letters, whether published or not, are also fertile ground for historians whether they use them to explore the circumstances and events of the writers' times or whether they use them to say something about the writers themselves. Jonathan Rose uses a similar mix of sources to confirm what working-class memoirists say about the autodidact culture in Britain and draws conclusions about what the working classes read and how they responded to that and other forms of education.⁸³ I, on the other hand, make no claims about what actually was: for example, I do not make claims about how healthy men were, or were not, rather I discuss what men said about their health in relation to the popular medical literature that informed the way they reported on the issues.

In exploring the similarities and differences in the sources, I attempt to say something meaningful about representations and ideals of men and manliness and how they were prescribed, which has been done before, but I also consider how men responded to injunctions and represented themselves, which has been less covered. Such an approach acknowledges the ways in which texts, and not just 'literary' texts, both reflect and shape 'material reality', a phrase I borrow from Mary Poovey for want of, as she says, a better phrase.⁸⁴ It also recognises both the 'passionate' belief among men during the period under discussion 'in the power of writing to shape the way people understand their position relative to the past, present, and future',⁸⁵ and the conviction that the 'the connection between literature and popular opinion – or between literature and events subsequent to its specific diffusion' was neither trivial or 'theoretical' and it merited 'consideration'.⁸⁶

⁸³ Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*.

⁸⁴ Poovey, *Making a Social Body*, p. 5; Diana C Archibald, 'Angel in the Bush', p. 232.

⁸⁵ John Ulrich, *Signs of Their Times: History, Labor, and Body in Cobbett, Carlyle, and Disraeli*, Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio, 2002, p. 7; on the power of writing, also see Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, pp. 19-24.

⁸⁶ *Hobart Town Courier*, 17 March 1837.

I treat autobiographies, memoirs, diaries and letters, published or unpublished, as evidence of men's representations of themselves. Although all are open to discussion about their use as historical evidence,⁸⁷ in the time I am looking at they served similar functions and displayed overlapping features, particularly among travellers and emigrants. Memoirs were printed in limited numbers for distribution among family and friends as well as for wider audiences, letters took on the character of journals when they were written over days or months until the next ship, and diaries were kept to send to families as well as for private use⁸⁸ I do not take diaries, as Dan Doll and Jessica Munns do, to be 'liminal' forms that disturb 'our sense of what is "real" and what is "fiction"' in the creation of 'ourselves'.⁸⁹ I reiterate that I have no 'urge' to 'stalk the coherent selves hiding beneath the surface' of 'self-reflexive writings'.⁹⁰ I am interested in the incoherent echoes of wider public discourses that both indicate certain shared notions in men's sense of themselves and demonstrate that it was important for men to represent themselves in these similar ways. I would also like to emphasise that the authors of newspapers, pamphlets, chap books, journals, parliamentary reports, medical and conduct literature, and published commentaries of all descriptions, were invariably men and are not, therefore, a gender-neutral yard stick by which to measure more private written sources: they are all evidence of how men represented themselves.

Klaus Theweleit uses diaries to startling effect to study the fascist consciousness among men of the Freikorps, paramilitary groups, during the early years of the Weimar Republic in Germany. And his conclusion that diary writing was 'a means of avoiding both feelings and degeneration' is in stark contrast to the diaries used in this work which display emotions and a desire for self-improvement.⁹¹ My sources were not as clearly defined or numerically limited. There is, as a consequence, some randomness

⁸⁷ Philip Woodfine, "'Nothing but Dust & the most minute Particles": Historians and the Evidence of Journals and Diaries', in Dan Doll and Jessica Munns (eds), *Recording and Reordering: Essays on the Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Diary and Journal*, Bucknall University Press, Lewisburg, 2006, p. 189.

⁸⁸ Andrew Hassam, *Sailing to Australia. Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1994, pp. 26-27; for example Thomas Scott, 'Life of Captain Andrew Barclay of Cambock, near Launceston, Van Diemen's Land / written from his own dictation at Cambock, February 19, 1836 to Thomas Scott, Assistant Surveyor-General, V.D.L.' ML, B 193, of which 74 copies were printed.

⁸⁹ Dan Doll and Jessica Munns, 'Introduction', in Doll and Munns (eds), *Recording and Reordering*, p. 20.

⁹⁰ Felicity A Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989, p. 6.

⁹¹ Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies II: Male Bodies: Psychoanalyzing the White Terror*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1989, p. 233.

in the diaries, letters and journals chosen – yet the similarities and repeated themes in such scattered sources reassure me that it is possible to draw some conclusions about how men represented themselves as ‘men’ rather than as individuals. Despite my attempts to cover the class spectrum, the literate, middling classes are disproportionately represented and aristocratic and lower class responses remain more suggestive than conclusive. English, Scottish and Irish men are represented, as are men from various parts of the Australian colonies, but not statistically and not to investigate difference. Though there are necessarily distinctions in men’s lived experience arising from such differences, this thesis is concerned with similarities: what made them, in the words of Robbie Burns, ‘a man for a’ that’.⁹²

Introducing the Australian legend

Most readers will have some knowledge of *Robinson Crusoe*, whether from the original story or one of its many incarnations. They will be less familiar with Russel Ward’s *The Australia Legend*. Ward drew on historical documents, literary writings, and folk ballads, to trace the process by which the distinctive characteristics of pastoral workers spread upwards through Australian society, and outwards from the interior, subtly influencing the manners and mores of the whole population. The traits of these pastoral workers, or bushmen, which Ward argued came largely from the convict population and from the disproportionate number of Irish among this group and among poor assisted emigrants, became bundled into a notion of ‘mateship’ which, by the 1950s when Ward’s book was first published, was popularly understood and consciously cultivated. Ward may have aimed to describe how it was a ‘myth’ or a ‘legend’ but his book gave the notion of ‘mateship’, a ‘history’ that proved it to be distinctively ‘Australian’. No work of Australian history sold as well as *The Australian Legend* which ran to three editions and fifteen printings over forty years.⁹³

Ward’s work promoted much discussion and it has not escaped academic criticism aimed at a diverse range of perceived ‘errors’. Much of the dispute centres around his association of rural bushmen with valued traits, when other men in other places in the early colonies arguably displayed similar characteristics. But historians themselves

⁹² Robert Burns, ‘A Man’s A Man for A’ That’, 1795.

⁹³ Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1987 (1958), Eleanor Hodges, ‘The Bushman Legend’, in John Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush: The Australian Quest for Identity*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1982; Matthew Jordan, *A Spirit of True Learning: The Jubilee History of the University of New England*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2004, p. 103.

have perpetuated the notion of 'mateship' as the province of all 'Australian' men. Its association with national identity was cemented when the heroic characteristics of Australian soldiers in the First World War – mateship, fortitude, larrikinism and anti-authoritarianism – were described as reflecting an older bushman ideal. The bushman evolved into the Anzac at Gallipoli where, in the popular imagination, the nation was born. This story has not gone unquestioned in academic circles. 'How was it', asks Alan Frost quite rightly, 'that we found the modes of bushman, pioneer, rebel, and Anzac to express our being as a people, when these reflect the actual experience of only a small minority of us?' War helped define Australian manhood through the figure of the Anzac, but, as Stephen Garton points out, 'it also problematised masculinity'.⁹⁴

Outside the academy, however, many have preferred to cling to the idea that the bushman and the Anzac 'painted a vision splendid, reaching for the heights of what man might do',⁹⁵ aided and assisted by historians like John Hirst who believes *The Australian Legend* 'has survived all its critics'. He describes the book as 'a work of mythic power'. 'Historians will never destroy it,' he declares, 'it will become a relic only when the culture-hero whom it celebrates ceases to be recognised and valued'.⁹⁶ Hirst is probably correct: that 'culture-hero' traces his lineage back to Robinson Crusoe and beyond, and there is ample evidence that he is still recognised and valued.

Hopes

It is a criticism, perhaps even an inherent limitation, of history writing that we tend to make 'ciphers' out of our subjects, effacing their personalities to make points about larger social, cultural and political processes.⁹⁷ Fiction is far more satisfying: which is why Thomas Carlyle admired Walter Scott's novels wherein 'the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men'.⁹⁸ He did not want to see 'Redbook Lists, and

⁹⁴ Alan Frost, 'The Conditions of Early Settlement: New South Wales, 1788-1840', in Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush*, p. 81; Stephen Garton, 'War and Masculinity in Twentieth Century Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. (56), 1998, pp. 86, 94; Hirst, 'The Pioneer Legend', in Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush*, p. 32

⁹⁵ Bill Gammage, 'Anzac', in Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush*, p. 65.

⁹⁶ John Hirst, 'Russel Ward (1914-95): The Life and the Work', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 107, 1996, pp. 357-358.

⁹⁷ Phil Withington, 'Company and Sociability in Early Modern England', *Social History*, vol. 32 (3), 2007, p. 295.

⁹⁸ Thomas Carlyle, *Collected Works. Library Edition. In Thirty Volumes. Vol. X Critical and Miscellaneous Essays: Vol. V*, Chapman and Hall, London, 1869, p. 275; Ulrich, *Signs of Their Times*, p. 65.

Court Calendars, and Parliamentary Registers', Carlyle wanted, 'the LIFE OF MAN... what men did, thought, suffered, enjoyed; the form, especially the spirit, of their terrestrial existence, its outward environment, its inward principle; *how* and *what* it was; whence it proceeded, whither it was tending'.⁹⁹ I hope that I have captured some of those thoughts, actions, sufferings and enjoyments on the following pages: that in treating men as a group I have not reduced them to ciphers. I also hope that I have contributed to an explanation of how Pascal's succinct summary of the nature of 'man' at the end of the seventeenth century – 'Description of man: dependency, desire of independence, need. Condition of man: inconstancy, weariness, unrest'¹⁰⁰ – was still relevant at the end of the eighteenth century, at the end of the nineteenth century and, arguably, today.

⁹⁹ Thomas Carlyle, *Essays: Collected and Republished*, Brown and Taggard, Boston, 1860, p. 89.

¹⁰⁰ Blaise Pascal, *Pensees*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/18269/18269-h/18269-h.htm#p_125>, accessed 12/11/2009.

Chapter 1:

Confined by the gout – perceptions of men's physical health

Every man his own physician — The natural result of wealth, luxury and indulgence — No man can completely act up to it — Relief from the restraint of civilised life — The new world regenerates the old?

One morning Robinson Crusoe's father called him into his chamber to expostulate warmly on the subject of Crusoe's 'rambling thoughts'. The elder Crusoe had made a comfortable estate as a merchant and was now retired from trade. He had also developed gout, that familiar companion to men's material good fortune. On that particular morning it had confined him to his bedroom.¹ For readers of *Robinson Crusoe* at the end of the eighteenth century, gout was a visible, pervasive, and painful, symbol of the consequences of an industrialising and commercialising world. It seemed to prove that 'man was never intended to be idle', as physician William Buchan wrote in the eighth edition of his popular *Domestic Medicine* in 1784. 'Inactivity frustrates the very design of his creation,' he explained, 'whereas an active life is the best guardian of virtue, and the greatest preservative of health'.²

Buchan was repeating a received wisdom, but as the eighteenth century drew to a close these words signaled an intensifying struggle for British men. The nexus of luxury, effeminacy and the nation that had preoccupied men at the beginning of the century was ramped up in public rhetoric in the face of ongoing military action with France and in other outposts of the emerging empire. Buchan posed a significant problem for men and civilisation in the late eighteenth century: how were men to be men, to fulfill the potential of their design morally and physically, if they succumbed to the idle life offered by civilisation? The paradox that Buchan's rhetoric did not expose was that while the middling classes aspired to the various luxuries of a civilising life and paid for it by sedentary occupations in urbanised environments, the labouring classes were arguably working harder and longer than ever before in the manufacturing works

¹ Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, London, 1790 (1719), p. 2.

² William Buchan, *Domestic Medicine; or, A treatise on the prevention and cure of diseases by regimen and simple medicines: With an appendix containing a dispensatory. For the use of private practitioners*, 8th edition, W Strahan, T Cadell, J Balfour, W Creech, London, 1784, p. 97.

that supplied the accoutrements of that civilised life. By the 1830s, however, discourses in medical literature, parliamentary reports and newspapers were as strident about the emaciated and enfeebled bodies of the unemployed and working poor as they had been about the inactive and effete bodies of sedentary workers at the turn of the century.

Men's own writings illustrated the far-reaching influence of the discussions surrounding men's constitutions. From politician William Windham, whose diaries revealed his disposition to melancholy and preoccupation with his health, to political author William Cobbett, who through his writings attempted to project a robust and healthy self-image, men's journals and letters referred to their health almost as often as they referred to the weather.³ These personal writings repeated the themes of public discourses, both of which are examined in this chapter. The common tropes were: firstly, that man's essential nature was to be active and that a civilised life threatened this nature; secondly, that 'balance' in health, work and leisure was necessary for well-being and that consumption and city life made balance difficult to achieve; thirdly, that working on the land, preferably one's own land, was the most beneficial means of achieving good health; fourthly, that, adventure in, or emigration to, Britain's colonies offered a solution to men's health concerns; and, lastly, a belief that both physical and moral health were visible on the surface of the body.

While the physiological effects of coffee, tea, tobacco, opium and spices (some of the luxuries against which medical writers and moralists railed) and of inadequate sanitation in cities, poor ventilation in factories, and grinding work (the topic of a wave of parliamentary reports after 1830) were unarguably real, this chapter is concerned with how these problems were represented in written discourses and how men responded to them in their own writings. It is notable that the self-doubt and ill-health found in the writings of British men at home is almost absent from those of British men traveling or residing in the Australian colonies where initial encounters with 'manly' Indigenous inhabitants was taken as evidence of the value of an uncivilised life.⁴ Even more significantly, the superior health benefits of the colonies seemed proven in the

³ William Windham, *The Diary of the Right Hon. William Windham 1784-1810*, Longmans Green and Co, London, 1866; John Ulrich, *Signs of Their Times: History, Labor, and Body in Cobbett, Carlyle, and Disraeli*, Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio, 2002, p. 55.

⁴ Arthur Phillip named Manly Cove for the Aboriginal men he met there, Peter Taylor, *Australia: The First Twelve Years*, 1982, p. 27; Peter Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales; A Series of Letters, comprising Sketches of the Actual State of Society in That Colony; Of its Peculiar Advantages to Emigrants; Of its Topography, Natural History, &c. &c.*, vol. 2, Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1966 (1827), pp. 46-47.

first generation of native-born white Australian men, who were described in contemporary accounts as tall, strong, and physically robust. These 'currency lads', as they were called, appeared to have overcome all the perceived threats to men's constitutions. But even British-born men, seemingly released from the anxieties of civilisation by adventure in, or emigration to, the new Australian colonies could proclaim, 'In England we exist – here we feel we are alive'.⁵

Every man his own physician

The problems facing men's constitutions, and advice for their solutions, were expansively articulated in popular medical literature, part of the eighteenth century's burgeoning publishing industry. Buchan's was not the only publication to run to many editions and books such as his were available through subscription libraries to people who could not afford their own copies.⁶ Increasing specialisation of publications in the early nineteenth century did not diminish the pervasiveness of medical information, rather it increased the variety of forms, from very detailed anatomical drawings to 'penny journals' like *The Oracle of Health*.⁷ The varied audiences for this literature, and the continuities in its content, show how health concerns were not confined to a particular time, or a certain class of men.

John Theobald summed up the purpose of much of this literature in 1760 in his slim publication *Every man his own physician. Being a complete collection of remedies, for every disease incident to the human body*, that sold for eighteen pence. Theobald adopted a plainness of 'stile' to make his publication as useful as possible to 'persons residing in the country, whose convenience or abilities, will not allow of the attendance of a physician or apothecary'.⁸ Thomas John Graham also aimed his 1826 publication *Modern Domestic Medicine* at 'the unprofessional reader' and thought his work would be particularly useful to 'clergymen, the heads of families, travellers, and persons

⁵ Anon, *Twenty Years Experience in Australia; being the evidence of residents and travellers in those colonies, as to their present state and future prospects; the whole demonstrating the advantages of emigration to New South Wales alike to men of capital and the labouring classes*, Smith, Elder & co, London, 1839, p. 26.

⁶ John Brewer and Iain McCalman, 'Publishing', in Iain McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, pp. 197-206.

⁷ *The Oracle of Health, A Penny Journal of Medical Instruction and Amusement*, 1834-1835.

⁸ John Theobald, *Every Man His Own Physician. Being a complete collection of remedies, for every disease incident to the human body. With plain instructions for their common use*, 5th edition, improved, W Griffin, R Withy, G Kearsley, London, 1760, p. vii.

proceeding to a foreign climate'.⁹ In the 1830s when publications had begun to specialise, like Richard Culverwell's 1834 publication on consumption, coughs, colds, asthma and other diseases of the chest, they still explicitly claimed to use 'popular language' in addressing 'non-medical readers'.¹⁰ Some, like William Pinnock's *A Catechism of Medicine; Or Golden Rules for the Preservation of Health, and the Attainment of Long Life*, 1820, employed the question and answer format that was often used in religious instruction,¹¹ indicating that, like those religious tracts, the book could be read by parents to children, and perhaps by masters to servants, as well as for personal use.¹²

There were two distinct approaches in this medical literature, either the description of disease symptoms and their remedies, or advice for maintaining health and increasing longevity, though these were not mutually exclusive. Theobald and Graham gave detailed alphabetical listings of diseases and conditions with details of symptoms, causes and treatments for each, and recipes for pills and tonics, as did Nicholas Culpepper's, *The English physician enlarged*, which was published in 1652 and still in print in 1826. But Culpepper also believed his book would help a man 'preserve his body in health' as much as 'cure himself being sick'. Pinnock's *Catechism* emphasised long life, as did a second book by Graham, *Sure methods of improving health, and prolonging life*, 1828, in which he invoked the spectre of the 'sedentary mode of living', that W Andre Pearkes had made the focus of his *Popular Observations on the Diseases of Literary and Sedentary Persons* in 1820. Southwood Smith's *The philosophy of health*, 1836, aimed like earlier works to promote 'human longevity and happiness' but this publication was no longer pocket size and purely descriptive. It consisted of two very thick, very detailed volumes with anatomical illustrations of bones, muscles, ligaments, organs, and so forth.¹³

⁹ Thomas John Graham, *Modern Domestic Medicine, or, A popular treatise illustrating the character, symptoms, causes, distinction, and correct treatment, of all diseases incident to the human frame: to which is added, a domestic materia medica*, Simpkin and Marshall, London, 1826.

¹⁰ Robert James Culverwell, *On Consumption, Coughs, Colds, Asthma and Other Diseases of the Chest; their remedial and avertive treatment; addressed in popular language to non-medical readers, with copious observations on the diet and regimen necessary for invalids. Also an appendix containing...*, London, 1834, pp. 1, 286.

¹¹ For example, *An Exercise Against Lying. For the Use of the Charity Schools*, John, Francis and Charles Rivington, London, 1776.

¹² William Pinnock, *A Catechism of Medicine; Or Golden Rules for the Preservation of Health, and the Attainment of Long Life*, Pinnock and Maunder, London, 1820.

¹³ Nicholas Culpepper, *The English Physician Enlarged. With three hundred and sixty-nine medicines, made of English herbs, that were not in any impression until this...*, H Richardson, Berwick, 1801, pp. 2-12; Thomas John Graham, *Sure Methods of Improving Health, and Prolonging Life, or, A treatise on the art of living long and comfortably, by regulating the diet and regimen...*, 3rd edition, Simpkin and Marshall,

Pinnock's *Catechism* was reasonably representative of the gamut of concerns in popular medical literature at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Its appendix covered treatment of 'common diseases' but its emphasis was on the preservation of health rather than treatment of problems and it appealed to a desire for long life. A weak constitution was caused by intemperance in eating or drinking, unwholesome food or air, lack of cleanliness, excessive labour or sloth, the sudden transition from heat to cold, and indulgence of the passions. Pinnock claimed that labour and exertion were not only of the 'highest importance' in preserving health and increasing strength, but also in the improvement of 'mental faculties'. The most beneficial exercise was done in the open air, but if walking, running or riding on horseback was not available, then dancing, fencing, running up and down stairs and 'the use of the dumb-bell' would assist the digestive organs and render the body 'light and elastic'. 'Youthful' exercises were hopping, jumping, running, balancing, skipping, swinging, dancing, cricket, and football; the 'manly' ones were tennis, cricket, swimming, rowing, angling, hunting, gardening, and agriculture; and, the 'gymnastic' included military exercises, leaping, foot-racing, throwing, fencing, cudgelling, archery, and wrestling – exercises practiced by 'the ancients' in Greece and Rome. In conclusion, Pinnock advocated balance, a recurring theme in much of the medical literature. For Pinnock this was moderate exercise, pure country air, a temperate climate, and strict temperance in food and drink, 'together with a prudent regulation of the passions': 'all extremes', he wrote, 'are unfriendly to health and longevity'.¹⁴

Though the pursuit of balance was a common feature in the literature, the factors to be balanced differed. When Pearkes emphasised the need for exercise as a corrective to the 'immense influence which the mind exercises over the body', he was employing a particular understanding of the nervous system emanating from the brain.¹⁵ This premise appears qualitatively different to the humoural approach of Theobald and Culpepper. Humoural theory, attributed to the fifth century BC Greek physician Hippocrates and continued by the Roman doctor Galen in the second century AD, worked on an understanding of bodily fluids, specifically phlegm, yellow bile, black bile and blood, as central to the functioning of the human body. Heat, cold, dryness and moisture affected the course of the humours from the stomach, through the blood

London, 1828, p. 187; W Andre Pearkes, *Popular Observations on the Diseases of Literary and Sedentary Persons, to which are added, Hints for Their Prevention and Removal*, W Fearman, London, 1819; Southwood Smith, *The Philosophy of Health; or, An exposition of the physical and mental constitution of man, with a view to the promotion of human longevity and happiness*, Charles Knight, London, 1836.

¹⁴ Pinnock, *Catechism of Medicine*, pp. 13, 21-23, 29, 37-40, 51-72.

¹⁵ Pearkes, *Popular Observations*, pp. 12-13.

stream to the brain, providing a direct connection between passions and cognition, physiology and psychology, individual and environment. Humours began to lose theoretical credibility by the seventeenth century when the circulation of the blood was properly understood but in practice the theory continued to sustain medicine well into the nineteenth century (and arguably remains today in many 'common sense' approaches to health maintenance).¹⁶

Pearkes' aim of a 'state of perfect equilibrium' was, therefore, part of a broader theoretical merging, of humoral doctrines with modern assumptions about nerves that still sought humoral balance.¹⁷ He used the 'robust labourer' to illustrate this point. The labourer, in his continual exercise in the open air enjoyed regularity of digestion and secretions so that 'there is no organ but performs its office; the faeces are evacuated, the chyle passes without any obstacle into the blood-vessels, and is soon changed into a pure and wholesome blood, the superfluous parts are carried off by urine and perspiration, and the whole frame remains in a state of perfect equilibrium'. Unfortunately, observed Pearkes, although 'sedentary habits' were the cause of the 'lamentable increase of nervous disorders', many physical activities had fallen into 'disrepute'. Agreeing with Pinnock he particularly regretted neglect of 'the gymnastic art.' Even so, cold baths and 'friction' with a flesh brush were within the capacity of all. Pearkes did not advocate abandonment of an 'enlightened and cultivated mind' but warned against sacrificing health in order to attain it. He did make a distinction, however, between an 'enlightened and cultivated mind' and those minds 'solely engaged in the acquirements of wealth'. Those men 'who sacrifice their health at the shrine of fortune... will be the greatest martyrs to these disorders'. As for Pinnock, Pearkes made avoidance of excess paramount: 'However necessary exercise may be to preserve the health, or to restore it when once lost, it is nevertheless requisite to pay some attention, and not to carry it to excess.'¹⁸

The changes in popular medical literature noted here – from pocket-sized like Culpepper's to shelf-sized like Southwood's, from herbal treatment of disease like Theobald's to regimens for long life like Pinnock's, from purely textual descriptions like Buchan's to accompanying anatomical illustrations like Southwood's – tell us about changes in understandings of the body, the professionalisation of medicine, and the

¹⁶ Noga Arikha, *Passions and Tempers: A History of the Humours*, HarperCollins, New York, 2007, pp. xvii-xxi.

¹⁷ Arikha, *Passions and Tempers*, pp. 243, 268; Pearkes, *Popular Observations*, pp. 12-13, 76-77, 81, 88-89, 139, 144.

¹⁸ Pearkes, *Popular Observations*, pp. 12-13, 76-77, 81, 88-89, 139, 144.

aspirations of the literate classes. But there is continuity as well as change in this literature. Authors continued to cite previous medical writers in each subsequent publication, a humoral Galenic view of the body was still explicit in Graham's 1828 publication, and the necessity of balance was still evident in the 1830s with Smith's aim to ensure that all the 'vital organs... perform their appropriate functions... in the most perfect harmony'.¹⁹ *The Oracle of Health*, a weekly journal, showed very clearly how change and continuity existed together. Alongside articles on cancer of the lip caused by smoking of pipes, microscopic observations of skin pores, and spinal deformities in children were ones on the devil as the cause of apparitions, on successfully growing the bulbous root taken from the hands of an Egyptian mummy, and a caution to parents that a sickening child was found to have a black cat sucking the breath from it during the night.²⁰

Writers for *The Oracle of Health* showed an awareness of this unevenness of change and persistence of older ideas.²¹ of particular interest to us is the enduring notion that every man be his own physician. The phrase drew on ideas of self-management in Greco-Roman tradition and captured early modern men's role as household heads where maintaining order and ensuring the welfare of the family included making medical decisions and carrying out medical treatment.²² While the phrase maintained currency, giving a strong impression of continuity, the substance of the idea changed as the eighteenth century turned into the nineteenth. Whereas in the 1760s, the phrase was used to describe a practical solution for a still predominantly rural society, by the end of the century it implied a man's responsibility for his own body, a rhetoric of responsibility that could be harnessed to the nation-building and empire-expanding aspirations of the state. In the 1830s *The Oracle of Health* still proclaimed that medicine should form part of 'every man's' education.²³

¹⁹ Graham, *Sure Methods of Improving Health*, see pages 18 and 38 for example; Smith, *The Philosophy of Health*, preface to vol. 2.

²⁰ *Oracle of Health*, No 1, 22 October 1834, p. 8; No 2, 29 October 1834, p. 2; No 27, 15 April 1835, p. 209; No 22, 18 March 1835, p. 169; No 24, 1 April 1835, p. 191; No 18, 18 February 1835, p. 143.

²¹ *Ibid.*, No 27, 15 April 1835, pp. 213-214.

²² Lisa Smith, 'The Relative Duties of Man: Domestic Medicine in England and France, ca. 1685-1740', *Journal of Family History*, vol. 31 2006, pp. 237-256.

²³ *Oracle of Health*, No 28, 22 April 1835, p. 221; and similarly in No 1, 22 October 1834, p. 4.

The natural result of wealth, luxury and indulgence

Another common feature in this medical literature was the identification of heavily populated communities as a threat to both the physical and moral health of men of all classes. Buchan had railed against the inclination of so many to 'crowd into great towns'. His anxieties ranged from unwholesome air to the unhealthy effects of sedentary occupations in trade, professions and manufacturing jobs. Cities were also the source of those luxuries and temptations that so often led to maladies such as gout.²⁴ '[W]hen I behold a fashionable table set out in all its magnificence', said an 'elegant writer' in *The Oracle of Health*, 'I fancy that I see gout and dropsies, fevers and lethargies, with other innumerable distempers, lying in ambuscade among the dishes'. This 'fancy', illustrated in words and pictures in the popular press, captured the corporeal and moral consequences of abuse of the stomach as well as attributing that abuse to the temptations of wealth and fashion. A simple diet, as physician George Cheyne had observed and as had been repeatedly cited, preserved a clear stomach and a clear head,²⁵ but a simple diet became harder to achieve in the presence of foodstuffs like tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, and tobacco, which were both physically addictive and consumed in new culturally significant, usually urban, sites; they were part of the 'revolution of sociability' which accompanied the 'industrious revolution'.²⁶ That modern men did not enjoy health and happiness was widely understood as the 'natural result of wealth, luxury, and indulgence'.²⁷

In addition to indulgence, inactivity – a 'sedentary life' – was 'contrary to the nature of man' and Buchan was blunt about men who neglected it: 'Weak and effeminate, they languish for a few years, and soon drop into an untimely grave'. At particular risk were 'studious' men who not only ignored exercise but allowed the excesses of 'intense thinking' to become a 'vice'. Such men were prone to gout, stone and gravel, cirrhosis of the liver, consumption of the lungs, head-aches, sore eyes, dropsy, fevers and, 'the most afflicting of all', hypochondria.²⁸ The *Oracle of Health* agreed that health was most likely to be injured by sedentary pursuits. For 'Desk Diseases', it recommend sea

²⁴ Buchan, *Domestic Medicine*, p. 60.

²⁵ eg, *Oracle of Health*, No 7, 3 December 1834, 51.

²⁶ Maxine Berg, 'In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century', *Past & Present*, vol. 182 (February), 2004, 98.

²⁷ Repeated, for example, by headmaster Samuel Butler, *The Life and Letters of Dr. Samuel Butler, Head-Master of Shrewsbury School 1798-1836, and Afterwards Bishop of Lichfield, in so far as they Illustrate the Scholastic, Religious, and Social Life of England, 1790-1840*, John Murray, London, 1896, p. 311.

²⁸ Buchan, *Domestic Medicine*, pp. 53, 60, 61-64.

bathing and keeping the bowels open.²⁹ Thomas Carlyle was one sedentary man of letters who tried to relieve his anxieties by moving back to the country. 'I must live in the country', he wrote, 'and work with my muscles more, and with my mind less'. In this way he would no longer be 'a pining piping wretch' but would once again be 'a whole man'.³⁰

But, as the *Oracle* told its readers, most of the occupations to be found in turn of the century towns came with specific health consequences: tailors suffered indigestion, afflictions of the bowels, and curvature of the spine; bakers were pale and prone to stomach disorders, coughs and rheumatism; chimney sweepers were subject to malignant skin cancer, inflammation of the eyes, and lung damage; house painters experienced colic, palsy, head-ache, and bowel complaints; house servants were affected by disorders of the digestive system and head; on their feet all day, footmen collected water in their scrotum; plumbers were short lived because of lead poisoning; hatters' use of oil of vitriol corroded the skin and nails on their fingers; cotton and silk spinners experienced lung disease and indigestion; and cooks and confectioners endured disordered digestion, head-ache and irritable temper.³¹ These 'adverse circumstances' not only made men 'short-lived', it also made them 'improvident, reckless, and intemperate' – cities destroyed their 'morality as well as the[ir] health'.³²

Evidence collected in Edwin Chadwick's 'inquiry into the sanitary condition of the labouring population of Great Britain' was unequivocal about the ultimate consequence of unhealthy men – the degeneration of the British race. Second generation labourers 'employed in the most important manufactories' were 'generally inferior in stature to their parents'. Weavers, 'though not originally a large race', had 'become still more diminutive under the noxious influences to which they are subject'. 'They are decayed in their bodies', said a Dr Mitchell, 'the whole race of them is rapidly descending to the size of Liliputians'. Even the complexions of the old men were better than the young, he observed. The report was just as clear about what the degeneration of the race meant – the destruction of the 'chief strength of the nation' such that 'fewer recruits of

²⁹ *Oracle of Health*, No 9, 17 December 1834, 70; No 18, 18 February 1835, 140.

³⁰ Quoted in Norma Clarke, 'Strenuous Idleness: Thomas Carlyle and the Man of Letters as Hero', in Michael Roper and John Tosh (ed), *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800*, Routledge, London, 1991, pp. 25-26, 36-37.

³¹ *Oracle of Health*, No 1, 22 October 1834; No 5, 19 November 1834; No 6, 26 November 1834, and further articles No 7, 3 December 1834, No 8, 10 December 1834.

³² Edwin Chadwick, *Report to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department from the Poor Law Commissioners on an Inquiry into the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain, with appendices*, Printed by W Clowes, for HM Stationery Off., 1842, p. 370.

the proper strength and stature for military service' could now be found. One witness recollected that 'the Bethnal Green and Spitalfields regiment of volunteers during the war as good-looking bodies of men' but doubted that 'such could be raised now'.³³

The Times was moved to defend the 'English People' in 1803. 'We seem to be regarded as a nation corrupted by wealth', it wrote, 'immersed in luxury; depraved by sensuality; and by indulgence and vanity rendered totally effeminate'. This however, was a mistake. True, the Englishman loved 'his domestic comforts' but he always knew 'when and how to resign them'. Conceding that the English were wealthy, *The Times* maintained they were still a moral nation, 'neither sunk in sloth nor sensuality'.³⁴ In its continued denials, *The Times* revealed the pressing problem at the heart of the debate, and the overarching anxiety about the eventual, perhaps inevitable, outcome if a solution was not found: Britain needed men able to fight its ongoing wars with France and expand its empire but the effects of civilisation that undermined individual men's physical capacity might see Britain destroyed like previous empires. Thirty years later, in a decade of peace and long after the discourse of luxury, effeminacy and the nation appeared to have run its course, the 1833 Factories Inquiry Commission expressed a surprisingly similar fear: 'By the present system of labour the physical energies of the main portion of the people of this country are destroyed; and I am afraid, if the thing continues much longer, we shall be so enfeebled and effeminated that we shall fall an easy prey to some stronger neighbour'.³⁵

Despite the historical changes between 1784 when Buchan addressed the pitfalls of gentry life and the mid-1830s when the *Oracle* described the occupational hazards of the 'labouring classes', it seemed to be an ongoing 'spirit of restless enterprise' that made their concerns so similar. John Sinclair, in *The Code of Health and Longevity*, 1818, wrote that this was what distinguished 'Modern times'. The 'new schemes' and 'new exertions of the faculties' which were endlessly necessary to fulfill 'multiplying' wants prevented men from enjoying 'that degree of peace and relaxation, so indispensably requisite for the preservation and the restoration of health'.³⁶ Whether caught up in other men's 'schemes' or consciously pursuing their own interests, the

³³ Ibid., pp. 185, 186.

³⁴ *The Times*, 18 July 1803.

³⁵ Factories Inquiry Commission. Second report of the Central Board of His Majesty's commissioners appointed to collect information in the manufacturing districts, as to the employment of children in factories, and as to the propriety and means of curtailing the hours of their labour: with minutes of evidence, and reports by the Medical Commissioners, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1833 (519), p. 28.

³⁶ John Sinclair, *The Code of Health and Longevity*, G and W Nicol, London, 1818, p. 345.

labouring classes were represented as just as prone to the novel health consequences of an industrialising and commercialising society as the middling and upper classes. And the heart of this restless enterprise was London.³⁷ William Cobbett often expressed his dislike of the city, and when Thomas Carlyle first visited, he told his brother that he understood why Cobbett called the place a 'Wen'. Like Sinclair though, Carlyle was sensible of London's attractions: 'There is an excitement in all of this'. In a hyperbolic fit, poet Josiah Condor described London as an 'immense catacomb of the living', a 'greedy all-absorbing excrescence', a 'vast gasometer', 'feculent hot-bed of vice', and 'still of iniquities'.³⁸ Condor was overstating the case, but concern in popular discourse about the ill-effects of cities was wide-spread and long-lasting.

The unsurprising antithesis to the evils of London, was the countryside. It offered wholesome air, fresh foods, and opportunities for recreational exercise, all antidotes to the unhealthy city, as popular songs expounded:

Now far from business let me fly,
Far from the crowded seat,
Of envy, pageantry, and power,
To some obscure retreat.
Where plenty sheds with liberal hand
Her various blessings round
Where laughing joy delighted roves,
And roseate health is found.³⁹

But Britain's rural areas also invoked something deeper – a nostalgic longing for the attachment to land that only cultivating it for yourself could provide, and this was an increasingly rare experience for men as enclosure policies, begun in the seventeenth century, continued. Popular medical literature was clear about the benefits of exercise – like efficient digestion, improved blood flow, keener perceptions, untroubled imaginations and longevity – and its various authors recommended all manner of games and activities in lieu of the agricultural labour that urbanising populations had seemingly lost. Even dancing was described as conferring 'great firmness', 'a manly

³⁷ *Oracle of Health*, No 2, 29 October 1834, p. 15.

³⁸ Ulrich, *Signs of Their Times*, pp. 37-40, 58; Thomas Carlyle, *The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle*, vol. 3, 1825-1825, Duke University Press, North Carolina, 1970, pp. 218-219; An unfinished manuscript c.1821 in Eustace R Conder, *Josiah Conder. A Memoir*, John Snow, London, 1857, pp. 215-216.

³⁹ 'To Solitude, The words by Miss Whately, in Joseph Haydn, *Twelve English Ballads. The Music, the undoubted Composition of Haydn. The Words selected and adapted to his Works by D. Arnold*, Longman & Groderip, London, 1788? (date is given in catalogue, not on the work).

confidence', a 'manly assurance', and 'physical and mental poise'.⁴⁰ However, these activities, suitable for, and possible in urban environments, were not satisfactory alternatives: it seemed difficult to imagine substitutes for the exercise in fresh air, close to the earth, that farming, or at least gardening, offered. In Buchan's opinion digging, planting, sowing and weeding exercised every part of the body and revived the spirits, and any man in sedentary employment 'should cultivate a piece of ground with his own hands' in his leisure hours.⁴¹

More than fifty years later Chadwick's report was similar in its assessment of the problem but less optimistic about the chances of a solution. It bemoaned the lack of open spaces and public walks that would give the labouring classes a chance of health recreation and a means to avoid the amusements of the 'ale-houses and skittle-alleys'. Those giving evidence for the report believed this to have not always been the case: that during the last half century, gardens at the peripheries of towns like Birmingham that allowed labourers to spend their evenings 'in a healthy and simple occupation', were 'now for the most part built over'. Chadwick's report also claimed that the 'want of open spaces for recreation' was no longer confined to 'the town population'. Even in rural districts, those who went into the field were 'trespassers' who injured the farmer. Children were especially affected, with no public squares, no gardens attached to the houses, and no play-grounds. This was 'pronounced to be a condition very injurious to their bodily development'.⁴²

All the talk of recreational outdoor exercise did not remove the deep-seated conviction that making one's living from the land was actually the most physically and morally healthy exercise. Where cultural prejudice existed against manual labour, it did not extend to the farmer or husbandman who derived 'independence' from their association with their labour. For all of Buchan's advocacy of gardens, therefore, he and other medical authors, could not fully overcome their opinion that those who had to 'labour for daily bread' – 'those who live by the culture of the ground' – were the most healthy and generally the happiest 'part of mankind'. And he felt that the 'great increase of inhabitants in infant colonies' was proof of this efficacy'.⁴³

⁴⁰ Stephen Philpott, James Nelson, Lewis Lockee, and John Locke quoted in Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800*, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, England, 2001, p. 73.

⁴¹ Buchan, *Domestic Medicine*, pp. 86-87.

⁴² Chadwick, *Report*, pp. 275, 277.

⁴³ Buchan, *Domestic Medicine*, pp. 49, 90-91.

No man can completely act up to it

That commonly held notions about the specific physical constitution necessary for being a man, and the ways to achieve this, were pervasive and influential is illustrated in men's own journals and letters. Clergymen, actors, gentlemen farmers, schoolmasters, naval explorers, aristocrats, retired army captains, historians, and politicians recorded their ailments, their weaknesses and the remedies they tried. These men may not all have enjoyed the same freedom of time as Maria Edgeworth's character Lord Glenthorn, of whom she wrote: 'he rather liked to be unwell, as it was a sort of occupation for him', but they did not experience the grinding work of farm and manufacturing labour.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, it is difficult to ascertain what illiterate men thought or did about their health.

Gout was the most often named ailment. When Thomas Walpole experienced his first 'miserable fit', he confided in John Sinclair. Gentleman farmer John Grainger, who faithfully recorded the weather and his health with diaries entries such as 'The Weather the same my self but indifferent', 'The Weather but indifferent and my self not well', was reduced by gout, to recording only 'The same' for stretches of days at a time. Men acknowledged that being sedentary was a problem. '[Y]ou are yet young, wrote 'JW' to the Reverend Richard Polwhele, 'and have, probably a long race of usefulness to run. You should not abridge this, by too great sedentariness'. Matthew Flinders advised his brother Samuel that if his disease was a consequence of 'sedentary habits, moderate exercise [was] the way to cure it'. Exercise was undertaken: the poet Byron preferred fencing and boxing, not only for his chest, arms and 'wind', but also to ward off the 'ennuyé', to which he was prone; and historian William Hutton thought both the mind and body 'were designed for action' and he was a prodigious walker. As John Hoath quoted to a friend, 'The wise for Cure on Exercise depend; God never made his works for Man to Mend; He reaps the Best, who Nature to repair, Draws physic from the fields in draughts of vital Air'.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *Ennui; or, Memoirs of the Earl of Glenthorn* was first published in 1809, was still in print in 1837, and was gleefully quoted in *The Oracle of Health*, No 16, 4 February 1835. In Maria Edgeworth, *Tales of Fashionable Life, in Five Volumes, Vol. I.*, Baldwyn & Craddock, London, 1837.

⁴⁵ Thomas Walpole to John Sinclair, Paris, 12 April 1786 in John Sinclair, *The Correspondence of The Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair, Bart. With Reminiscences of the Most Distinguished Characters Who Have Appeared in Great Britain, and in Foreign Countries, During the Last Fifty Years*, Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, London, 1831, p. 122; 18 April & 26 September, John Grainger, Diaries, WSRO, ASS MSS 30721-30728; Paul Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders: Personal Letters from An Extraordinary Life*, Hordern House in association with the Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002, p. 162; Byron quoted in Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason*, WW Norton & Company, New York, 2004, p. 455; William Hutton, *The Life of William Hutton, F.A.S.S. including a Particular Account of The Riots of Birmingham in 1791, to*

When men did become ill they tried home remedies: malt liquor and milk for gout; marshmallow tea for painful urination; rhubarb tincture for 'febrile affection & pain in the Bowels', calomel and rhubarb for a cold, and castor oil when simply feeling 'unwell'.⁴⁶ Many men were prepared to take all necessary steps to good health and happiness, as cotton merchant Absalom Watkin summarised in his diary: 'I propose to do all I can to improve my health. I will take as much exercise as I can. Keep as cheerful as I can. Avoid long continued thought on any one subject. Sometimes omit study for a week altogether. Avoid too much feeling. Restrain passion'.⁴⁷ And self-control and moderation were often expressed aims. 'I must practise self-denial', wrote the Reverend S Tillbrook, 'mortify the flesh, drink little, move about more, and in short... never commit excess of any kind'.⁴⁸

Few men, however, felt their efforts met with the health and happiness they were trying to achieve. Like William Windham whose diaries record his sleep patterns as often as his mathematical musings, men rebuked themselves for 'careless intemperance' and self-doubt was evident in their reflections.⁴⁹ Despite the amplitude and diversity of advice for health, the ambiguity of the notion of 'balance' was, arguably, more of a recipe for failure than success. A review of John Sinclair's *Code of Health and Longevity* clarified the extent of the problem of health advice: 'when our author', wrote *The New Annual Register* in 1808

descends to such minute particulars as to limit our diet to certain articles of food, and to ascertain comparative weights or measures of each article; when he teaches the necessity of making a difference in the potency of the table beer we drink in summer and winter; when the difference of soil or earth, of air, of water, and of heat or fire, are all brought forwards, and insisted upon as adjuncts of high consequence and importance, we are fearful that the present *code* of health, like the present code of our national law, will be found so

Which is Subjoined, The History of His Family, Written by Himself, and Published by His Daughter Catherine Hutton, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, London, 1816, pp. 223, 283-284, 286; Letter from John Hoath to William Hall, 23 September 1811, William Hall Archives, WSRO, ADD MSS 39854-858; Hoath was quoting John Dryden, *The Poems of John Dryden*, vol. 1, C Whittingham, Chiswick, 1822.

⁴⁶ Hutton, *Life*, pp. 223, 283-284, 286; 23 September 1811, 14 September 1812, William Hall Archives; Captain Robert Johnson, Diaries, ESRO, AMS 5848/1.

⁴⁷ Magdalen Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993, p. 74.

⁴⁸ Butler, *Life and Letters*, pp. 80, 291.

⁴⁹ Windham, *Diary*, pp. 4, 6, 52, 82, 23-24, 155, 303.

multiplied and complex that few men can thoroughly understand it, and no man completely act up to it.⁵⁰

Men tried. Clergyman Richard Hurrell Froude told his diary that he 'must make a vigorous stand' because he had 'eaten beyond the bounds of moderation' and was liable to 'be carried away altogether'. Explorer Edward Eyre was certain that men were not given 'vigor of body, activity of mind and energy of will' for it to be 'unexercised' or to become 'enervated thro' idleness and inactivity'. Though surveyor Robert Hoddle found life 'an incessant struggle' he was increasingly indolent, which he described as a 'pernicious practice'. He promised himself 'future exertion for the hours that are idly spent'. Tomorrow, he wrote, 'I'll be more alert: tomorrow comes; but alas! The same listless and restless spirits; always promising, but never performing: my whole life, a contradiction of my knowledge'.⁵¹

Equilibrium was the primary injunction of the medical writers and commentators and the state with which men struggled most strongly. What did balance and harmony mean? Was it avoidance of excess as advocated by Buchan when he wrote 'Man is evidently not formed for continual thought more than for perpetual action', and by Sinclair when he declared that 'voluptuousness, or luxury carried to an extreme' is as destructive as 'an over-scrupulous and rigid abstinence'?⁵² Was it merely a matter of prosaic physiology, of equalising perspiration and urine?⁵³ Or a matter of regulation where apportioning the day regularly to meals, exercise, sleep and labour would ensure good health and excellent spirits?⁵⁴ Or did it mean diversity?

[T]o be sometimes in the city, and sometimes in the country; – sometimes at rest, but at other times to take frequent exercise; – sometimes to use the warm bath, and sometimes the cold; – to anoint sometimes, and at other times to neglect it; – to avoid no kind of food that may be in common use; – sometimes

⁵⁰ *The New Annual Register, or General Repository of History, Politics and Literature, for the Year 1808*, Printed for John Stockdale, London, 1808, p. 340.

⁵¹ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century with an Introduction on Diary Writing*, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1923, p. 363; Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1984 (1859), p. 122; Robert Hoddle, Diary, SLV, H12032, Box 53/2 (a) & (b), pp. 12-13.

⁵² Buchan, *Domestic Medicine*, p. 61; Sinclair, *Code of Health and Longevity*, p. 464.

⁵³ Sinclair, *Code of Health and Longevity*, p. 238; Pearkes, *Popular Observations*, pp. 88-89.

⁵⁴ Sinclair, *Correspondence*, p. 49.

to eat in company, and at other times to retire from it; – in short, by a varied life, to be always prepared for any circumstances that may happen.⁵⁵

William Godwin described this as cultivating every part of man's nature.⁵⁶ Karl Marx in 1845 saw it as a beneficial aspect of communist society where a man could hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, and criticise after dinner.⁵⁷ 'Exercise' was equally ambiguous: the one word could encompass quoits and dancing, labouring for one's daily bread on the farm, and the sorts of gymnastic activities that prepared men for military battle. For physician Cheyne it meant riding in a carriage, for poet Byron it was boxing practice.⁵⁸ And the metaphor that Sinclair used to describe the pursuit of balance revealed just how treacherous it could be. '[L]ike skilful mariners', he wrote, 'we should neither slacken our sails too much in fair weather, nor spread them too wide in a storm'.⁵⁹ Unfortunately, even skilful mariners faced the prospect of hitting reefs, being shipwrecked or drowning.

Relief from the restraint of civilised life

Climate was not always addressed in popular medical literature, being classed with a good natural constitution and healthy and long-living ancestors as outside of the control of individual men, but it was widely acknowledged to have direct bearing on men's health. Travel in, or a move to, a warmer or dryer climate was advocated by the medical profession for conditions like consumption. Thus it was one of benefits, along with opportunities for exercise and an absence of the luxuries of civilisation, emphasised in literature promoting the Australian colonies to emigrants.

Sinclair wrote at length on climate in his *Code of Health and Longevity*. A residence in a temperate climate was of course best, but he was more specific: it should have a slightly elevated situation, a southern exposure (if in Great Britain), be near the sea or a rapid stream or river, have dry soil, a 'somewhat moist' rather than 'very dry'

⁵⁵ Sir John Sinclair ALS to Alexander Macleay re M's appointment as Colonial Secretary to NSW, ML, DOC 1178, p. 463.

⁵⁶ William Godwin, *The Enquirer. Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature. In A Series Of Essays*, Robert Campbell & Co, Philadelphia, 1797, p. 198.

⁵⁷ Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, 1845, <<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01a.htm#2>>, accessed 12/12/2009.

⁵⁸ Christopher E Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West: Gender, Civilization and the Body*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, New York, 2008, p. 86; Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason*, p. 445.

⁵⁹ Sinclair, *Code of Health and Longevity*, p. 464.

atmosphere, and be in a 'well-planned village, or totally in the country'. It was a change of climate that could cause most damage or confer most benefit and to go from a cold and damp, to a dry and warm climate, especially at 'an advanced period of life' would 'promote health and longevity'.⁶⁰ When Alexander Macleay was appointed Colonial Secretary to New South Wales in 1825, John Macarthur junior feared that he was too old for the position, but Sinclair congratulated him. 'It may do good to your family', he wrote, and, 'it may do good to yourself, being so healthy a climate that you may live there ten or twenty years longer than you would do in Europe.'⁶¹

The very earliest reports from the new Australian colonies rarely failed to mention the healthy climate. From ship's mate Daniel Southwell, who wrote home of the 'salubrious Climate' in 1790 to the anonymous author of *Twenty Years Experience in Australia; being the evidence of residents and travellers in those colonies, as to their present state and future prospects* in 1839, the theme proved enduring.⁶² *Twenty Years Experience* collated, quoted from and summarised previous paeans to Australia's climate. The climate, it said, was 'altogether highly salubrious, and is particularly favourable to children' but no 'less favourable to all the other stages of human existence'. Specifically, '[t]he state of the weather and atmosphere were truly delicious and exhilarating. The air was cool, fresh, and pure – quite a luxury to breath it; the atmosphere clear as crystal, the sky intensely blue, and the sun shining with brilliancy and warmth, whilst a gentle breeze tempered the fervency of his rays – it was enjoyment to live in such a climate.'⁶³ Advice to emigrants in 1848 continued to highlight the importance of choice of climate over economic betterment, because no increase in 'the world's goods' would ensure happiness if health was wanting.⁶⁴

And health was cited by so many men who moved to the Australian colonies, including barrister Edward Landor, businessman William Effingham Lawrence, and manufacturer Robert Archibald Alison Morehead.⁶⁵ Physician Anthony Colling Brownless, tried travel

⁶⁰ Sinclair, *Code of Health and Longevity*, pp. 419, 451.

⁶¹ Sir John Sinclair ALS to Alexander Macleay; 'McLeay, Alexander (1767-1848)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020156b.htm>>, accessed 12/12/2009.

⁶² 27 July 1790, Daniel Southwell, Letters from D. Southwell, concerning New South Wales, 1787-1790, British Library, MS ADD 16383, p. 44.

⁶³ Anon, *Twenty Years Experience*, pp. 26-27, 30.

⁶⁴ JC Byrne, *Twelve Year's Wanderings in the British Colonies. From 1835 to 1847*. vol. 1, Richard Bentley, London, 1848, p. 39.

⁶⁵ Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, p. 9; Bruce Wall, 'Lawrence, William Effingham (1781-1841)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020079b.htm>>; David S Macmillan, 'Morehead, Robert Archibald Alison (1814?-1885)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020221b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 14/11/2009.

to recover his health – to St Petersburg, Norway and Denmark in 1834, the United States and Canada in 1835, and Portugal and Spain in 1837 – but his health only fully recovered when he arrived in Australia. Architect John Verge retired from his successful London practice to farm a country estate because of ill health but New South Wales beckoned more strongly. Edward Deas Thomson was offered a job in Demerara but accepted a position in New South Wales for less money, because he felt the climate and prospects to be healthier. George Fife Angas suffered ill health and ‘gloom’ from the pressures of business and public life. Under medical orders he traveled for five months, taking daily exercise on horseback. He eventually emigrated to Australia and lived to the age of ninety.⁶⁶

Farmer’s son George Hawke did not reflect on his health as articulately as some of these higher classed men. Born in Bedruthen, England in 1802, Hawke did record in his journal that he was apprenticed to a wool stapler because he was too ‘puny’ and unhealthy for farming. He was prone to attacks of what he called ‘low nervousness’ during which ‘everything connected with both this and the future world wears the most gloomy aspect’. Hawke overcame this ‘unhappy disposition’ by rising early and keeping active. He would not ‘indulge’ himself with more sleep than nature required: a tip that he had read in what he referred to as ‘Mason’s Remains’. Hawke also suffered severe consumptive-like coughs in English winters, and though he credits losses in his wool-stapling business as the cause for conceiving ideas of emigration in 1828, he stated in his journal that he never experienced those coughs in Australia unless visiting the town of Sydney.⁶⁷

Men did, of course, fall ill in Australia. Health problems caused some, like Governor Arthur Phillip, First fleet surgeon Dennis Conisden and Baptist minister John Saunders, to return home.⁶⁸ Navy surgeon William Hopley tried to do so but the government would not provide passage for his large family. Because of ill health, Augustus

⁶⁶ SG Foster, *Colonial Improver: Edward Deas Thomson 1800-1879*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1978, pp. 17-18; KF Russell, ‘Brownless, Sir Anthony Colling (1817-1897)’, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A030250b.htm>>; Harley Preston, ‘Verge, John (1782-1861)’, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020504b.htm>>; ‘Angas, George Fife (1789-1879)’, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010018b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 14/11/2009.

⁶⁷ George Hawke, Journal of an early Cornish settler in NSW, ML, A1938 CY1156, pp. 3, 4, 8, 33; ‘Mason’s Remains’ may have been *Select Remains: Of the Reverend John Mason, M.A. Late Rector of Water-Stratford...* which had been in print since at least 1745 and was still in print in the 1850s, or it may have been an 1801 edition of *Mason’s Select Remains* printed with James Janeway’s *Token for Children*.

⁶⁸ BH Fletcher, ‘Phillip, Arthur (1738-1814)’, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020292b.htm>>; LA Gilbert, ‘Conisden, Dennis (-1815)’, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010230b.htm>>; BG Wright, ‘Saunders, John (1806-1859)’, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020373b.htm>>; ADB, 14/11/2009.

Theodore Henry Alt requested relief from his duties as surveyor general. Explorers Charles Sturt and Charles Throsby returned unwell from their expeditions, and the arduousness of royal commissioner John Thomas Bigge's travels told heavily on his health. Philip Gidley King and his son Phillip Parker King were both dogged by ill health though it rarely interfered with, respectively, governing the colony, or naval surveying.⁶⁹

Even in the Australian colonies, sedentary occupations needed to be undertaken and men's responses to these were invariably the same as in Britain. Chief justice Francis Forbes, barrister Alban Charles Stonor, parliamentarian Edward Deas Thomson and public servant and banker Cornelius Driscoll are among the men whose biographers contend that duties of office contributed to their ill health.⁷⁰ Edwyn Henry Statham did not feel he was 'calculated altogether for a sedentary life'. He could 'stick close to a desk' for a certain time but balanced this with walking around town on 'different business' at 'an extraordinary rate'. '[I]t is the effect', he explained, 'of a certain restlessness or a fondness for perpetual motion (underlining in original).' Eventually Statham 'turned farmer' because of his health and felt that he had 'in fact escaped from the Town – as one who had been whirled in a vortex – and by some means been extricated'.⁷¹ Similarly, Henry Fyshe Gisborne enjoyed his duties as the sole commissioner of lands in Port Phillip, that involved long rides and much camping out, because he thought them good for his health.⁷² The remedies that men sought for health conditions were also similar to those they might have tried in Britain, such as 'Calomel' (mercurous chloride) as a purgative; 'Calomel & Jalap' for sore throats, head aches and colds; exercise in the country to counter strenuous clerical work; and, sea voyages to alleviate asthma and severe coughs.⁷³

⁶⁹ 'Hopley, William (-1815)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010513b.htm>>; Bernard T Dowd, 'Alt, Augustus Theodore Henry (1731-1815)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010013b.htm>>; HJ Gibbney, 'Sturt, Charles (1795-1869)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020458b.htm>>; Vivienne Parsons, 'Throsby, Charles (1777-1828)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020482b.htm>>; JM Bennett, 'Bigge, John Thomas (1780-1843)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010093b.htm>>, AGL Shaw, 'King, Philip Gidley (1758-1808)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020052b.htm>>; 'King, Phillip Parker (1791-1856)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020053b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 14/11/2009.

⁷⁰ CH Currey, 'Forbes, Sir Francis (1784-1841)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010366b.htm>>; 'Stonor, Alban Charles (1817-1866)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020451b.htm>>; 'Thomson, Sir Edward Deas (1800-1879)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020479b.htm>>; Ella K Mulcahy, 'Driscoll, Cornelius (1782-1847)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010307b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 14/11/2009.

⁷¹ Edwyn Henry Statham – letters (5), 1833-1846, written from Sydney and Parramatta to his brothers in England, ML, MSS 7281.

⁷² Marnie Bassett, 'Gisborne, Henry Fyshe (Fysche) (1813-1841)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010413b.htm>>, ADB, accessed 14/11/2009.

⁷³ For example, Lynnette Peel (ed), *The Henty Journals: A Record of Farming, Whaling and Shipping at Portland Bay 1834-1839*, The Miegunyah Press in association with The State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, 1996, pp. 63, 112, 183; 'Welsh, John (-1832)',

It is not unexpected that the authors of literature promoting emigration should paint a rosy picture of health: that Alexander Marjoribanks should claim the life of a shepherd to be the healthiest, most cheerful and contented of all farm servants and that their work was not 'irksome' even 'to those who have been accustomed to sedentary occupations;' that authors would claim for themselves, and quote others as having, 'excellent health and spirits', 'undisturbed health', and not 'a moment's illness;' that it was 'the almost daily succession of bright skies and cheering sunshine', the 'pure and balmy air', 'the freedom and independence', that would give a man 'a positive pleasure in mere animal existence, in the act of breathing'.⁷⁴ These authors were in the business of persuading men to move to Australia.

Similar reports, however, abound in letters, unpublished journals and the published accounts of men without overt motives. The 'salubrious' climate gave Thomas Henty three times his usual appetite. According to John Hunter on Norfolk Island, it made the constitutions of both humans and animals more 'prolific' than in any other part of the world. Robert Hoddle in Van Dieman's Land thought it did not 'depress natural vigor' or impair the constitution, thus promoting longevity.⁷⁵ A 'drier atmosphere and cooler waters' was thought to benefit invalids from India. And consumption, when it occurred took 'generally as many years in running its course, as it would be months, in England'.⁷⁶ The opportunities for exercise, and the dearth of 'Luxuries' recommended the colonies for the relief of gout and other existing illnesses, as well as for toughening men against future debility. Richard Johnson advised Jonathan Sonard that this was 'one of the best Countries in the world for the Cure' of gout. Daniel Southwell told his mother that his 'little Fits of Indisposition' were 'getting better Every Day' and he hoped

<<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020528b.htm>>: Michael Persse, 'Wentworth, William Charles (1790-1872)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020531b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 14/11/2009.

⁷⁴ Alexander Marjoribanks, *Travels in New South Wales*, Smith, Elder and Co, London, 1847, p. 36; James Demarr, *Adventures in Australia Fifty Years Ago*, Swan Sonnenschein and Co, London, 1893, p. 210; William Smillie, *"The Great South Land:" Four Papers on Emigration, Designed to Exhibit the Principles and Progress of the New Colony of South Australia*, 2nd edition, enlarged and amended, Simpkin & Marshall and JC Hailes, London, 1838, p. 19; Charles Rowcroft, *Tales of The Colonies; Or, The Adventures of an Emigrant*, 3rd edition, Smith, Elder and Co, London, 1845 (1843), p. 535; Anon, *A Voice From The Bush in Australia: Shewing Its Present State, Advantages, and Capabilities in a Series of Letters from an Irish Settler and Others in New South Wales*, William Curry, Jun. and Company; Smith, Elder, and Company; John Johnstone, Dublin, London and Edinburgh, 1839, p. 39; T Horton James, *Six Months in Australia; with some account of Port Philip and Portland Bay, in Australia Felix; with Advice to Emigrants; etc.*, J. Cross, London, 1838, p. 16.

⁷⁵ Thomas Henty to Edward Henty, 21 June 1836, Miscellaneous correspondence, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7739, Box 119/2 (e), Box 119/3; John Hunter, *An Historical Journal of Events at Sydney and at Sea 1787-1792 by Captain John Hunter, Commander H.M.S. Sirius, with further accounts by Governor Arthur Phillip, Lieutenant P.G. King, and Lieutenant H.L. Ball*, Angus & Robertson in association with the Royal Australian Historical Society, Sydney, 1793 (1968), p. 138; Hoddle, Diary, pp. 30-31.

⁷⁶ James Backhouse, *A Narrative of A Visit to the Australian Colonies*, Johnson Reprint Edition 1967, Hamilton, Adams and Co, London, 1843, pp. 32, 290.

'in Time' to be 'more hearty and robust, than seemed immediately natural to [him], or likely to fall to [his] share'. David Waugh felt himself becoming similarly 'tough'. He was on horseback from seven in the morning to eleven at night with nothing to eat but he 'did not feel at all tired next morning'.⁷⁷

So while George Wyndham's brothers, brothers-in-law, and nephews in Sussex grew fat and gouty, he, in New South Wales, mentioned only one day of illness in ten years of diary recordings. His brother-in-law could not attend a party because of gout, and his brother tried sea-bathing for the 'lameness' that the rest of the family called gout, and the Wyndham women worried about the indolence of the rising generation, but George had that one day on which he was 'ill from rheumatism' – which he spent 'trenching a piece of garden for tobacco'.⁷⁸

Missionaries James Backhouse and George Washington Walker remarked on the restorative, perhaps even regenerative, effects of 'labour in a mild though humid climate' when they undertook a report on the condition of convicts in Van Diemen's Land for lieutenant-general George Arthur. The convicts were also secluded from 'strong drink' and lived on a 'spare diet'. Backhouse and Walker concluded that the 'general health of the prisoners is good'.⁷⁹ What convicts themselves made of this would be difficult to ascertain – especially in light of Hamish Maxwell Stewart's current data harvesting project that seems to be showing that convicts were in fact longer living than would have been expected⁸⁰ – but convicts, and half-brothers, Richard Taylor and Simon Brown, in letters to their father, portrayed their experiences in the colonies in similarly positive terms as emigrants.⁸¹ Aristocratic convict John Grant also regarded his time in service to John Foley as a farm labourer and children's tutor as a haven of sorts and chopping wood and washing his own shirt and neck cloth, were humbling, but

⁷⁷ Reverend Richard Johnson to Jonathan Stonard, 27 November 1795 in George Mackaness, *Some Letters of Rev. Richard Johnson, B.A. First Chaplain of New South Wales, Collected and Edited, With Introduction, Notes and Commentary, In Two Parts, Part II.*, reprint edition, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1954 (1978), 11; Letter 3 – 1 August 1787, Letter 16 – 27 July 1790, *Letters from D Southwell*, pp. 29, 44; David Waugh to sister Eliza, 10 February 1835, Waugh Family Papers, 1834-1859, ML, A827, CY 812.

⁷⁸ Extracts from Dinton-Dalwood letters, 1827-1853, prepared by and with foreword by Dorothy Edith Wilkinson 1964, ML, MSS 1657, CY 3815; 13 October 1830, George Wyndham, *Diary*, ML, MSS 1946/1-2, B1313, CY 859.

⁷⁹ Correspondence, on the subject of secondary punishment, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers 1834 (82), p. 12.

⁸⁰ Hamish Maxwell Stewart, 'Shipmates Unto Death? The Convict Voyage and Convict Life in Early 19th Century Australia', Mellon Sawyer Seminar Series, University of Sydney, Australia, 21 August 2009.

⁸¹ Bruce Hindmarsh, 'Wherever I go I will right to you' in Lucy Frost and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, *Chain Letters: Narrating Convict Lives*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001, pp. 174-175.

unexpectedly satisfying.⁸² Whether men were actually healthier in the Australia colonies, although an interesting question in itself, is not the point: what is significant is the widespread reporting by men that this was the case.

The good health, high spirits and distinct lack of ennui in the writings of men in the colonies, was a marked contrast to their relatives, colleagues and associates at home. Brothers George and Robert Dixon provided an explanation that would have been recognised by authors and readers of popular medical literature. Though they were 'obliged to work very hard' they found 'more satisfaction & peace of mind than [they] ever experienced in [their] life' through the 'pleasure' of working on their own land.⁸³ And the further from cities and 'civilisation', the better many men felt. 'Encamped' at Moores Flats, Robert Hoddle heard the colonial treasurer declare that 'he had found so much benefit from the change of climate, he would give up half his salary to breathe the pure air of the Interior'.⁸⁴ But it was not simply wholesome country air and physical exercise that made such a difference. As settler John Webster described, it was 'this life in the wilderness', this 'primitive sort of life' that they enjoyed.⁸⁵ The anonymous author of *A Month in the Bush of Australia* summed up what the colonies could offer British men as an 'almost total relief from the restraint of civilized life'.⁸⁶

The new world regenerates the old?

Such good health and high spirits were seen on the bodies of men, in accordance with long-held European perceptions – influenced by the ideas of Charles Le Brun, Gerard de Lairesse, and John Caspar Lavater – that outward appearance indicated the presence of both physical health and moral virtue.⁸⁷ That it was possible to 'read' a face in this way was a persuasive and popular notion and often practiced. As Edward Snell said of a new acquaintance, 'if he is not a respectable man in the true sense of

⁸² Yvonne Cramer, *This Beauteous, Wicked Place: Letters and Journals of John Grant, Gentleman Convict*, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2000, pp. 128, 189, 190.

⁸³ Letter 1 – 1821, Letter 6 – 1823, George and Robert Dixon, Letters from Tasmania, ML, B425, CY 2408.

⁸⁴ Hoddle, Diary, p. 94.

⁸⁵ John Webster, *Reminiscences of an Old Settler in Australian and New Zealand*, Southern Bookbinding, New Zealand, 1908, pp. 58, 74, 101.

⁸⁶ Anon, *A Month in the Bush of Australia. Journal of One of a Party of Gentlemen Who Recently Travelled from Sydney to Port Philip; with Some Remarks on the Present State of the Farming Establishments and Society in the Settled Parts of the Argyle Country*, J Cross; Simpkin and Marshall, London, 1838, p. 39.

⁸⁷ John Caspar Lavater, *Lavater's Essays on Physiognomy, With Ornamental Caricatures, And Finished Portraits, Translated From the Last Paris Edition By the Rev. C. Moore*, W Locke, London, 1793, p. 9; John Brewer, *The Common People and Politics 1750-1790*, Chadwyck-Healey, Cambridge, 1986, p. 21.

the word I have not skill in physiognomy'.⁸⁸ The same reasoning meant that the effects of luxuries and vices, or city living and sedentary occupations, or grinding factory work, would be seen on the body and in the face. We have already seen how fat and lameness were associated with indolence, and a 'diminutive' stature with the afflictions of the labouring poor. In contrast, the white men born in New South Wales were described as 'tall and slender' with an 'open manly simplicity of character'. They were called 'currency lads', and though many of them, at first, were children of convicts, this openness in their features showed that drunkenness was almost unknown among them and 'honesty proverbial'. This was the assessment of ship's surgeon Peter Cunningham in 1827.⁸⁹ It was repeated by royal commissioner John Thomas Bigge, who added that they were 'capable of undergoing more fatigue, and are less exhausted by labour than native Europeans', and it was echoed almost verbatim by Alexander Marjoribanks in his published account of travels in New South Wales in 1847.⁹⁰

Historian CE Cunningham, in the 1950s, summarised such accounts of currency lads as having marked them 'as a new physical type'.⁹¹ At the time, however they may have been considered as much a resurgence of an older physical type, the result of acting on those lessons from the medical literature. That the 'ancients' of Greece and Rome were healthier and longer-living men was a pervasive theme in medical literature and the conviction that it was an 'abstemious manner of life' and 'simplicity of manners' among the 'ancients' that rendered them robust and healthy, preserved the vigour of their minds and prolonged their lives, was still around in the 1830s.⁹² Britons could see the evidence for themselves in sculptures from the Athenian Parthenon, brought to London between 1801 and 1805, purchased from Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin by

⁸⁸ Edward Snell, *The Life and Adventures of E. Snell*, 1842, SLV, MS 12812, F Box 3575/2, p. 9.

⁸⁹ Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol. 2, pp. 53-56.

⁹⁰ JT Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner into the state of the Colony of New South Wales*, London, 1822, p. 81; Marjoribanks, *Travels in New South Wales*, p. 217; as well as in parliamentary reports, for example, Alex Riley's evidence to the Report from the Select Committee on Criminal Laws, &c., House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1819 (585), pp. 29-30; and many others, for example, Alexander Harris, *Settlers and Convicts, or Recollections of Sixteen Years' Labour in the Australian Backwoods by An Emigrant Mechanic*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1953 (1847), pp. 89-90.

⁹¹ CE Carrington, *The British Overseas: Exploits of a Nation of Shopkeepers*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1950, p. 357.

⁹² Pinnock, *Catechism of Medicine*, pp. 37-40; Goss, *The Aegis of Life: a non-medical commentary on the indiscretions arising from human frailty...*, 15th edition, Sherwood, Neely and Jones, London, 1826, p. x; Copies of all correspondence and communications between the Home Office and the Irish government, during the year 1827, Lunatic asylums (Ireland), House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1828 (234), p. 19; *Oracle of Health*, No 30, 29 April 1835, p. 239.

the British Parliament in 1816 and displayed in their own room in the British Museum from 1832.⁹³

The benefits of isolation from wealth and luxury, lack of opportunity for indulgence, and the necessity of labouring for their daily bread was evidenced in Indigenous Australians like Bennelong who was described as being 'of good stature, stoutly made', with a 'bold, intrepid countenance' the sort of 'native' man after whom Arthur Phillip named Manly Cove.⁹⁴ John Hunter described Indigenous men in 1793 as 'thin, but very straight and clean made; [they] walk very erect, and are active'. Robert Hoddle in 1824 thought them 'a fine looking race of men', and GF Moore remembered the 'natives' he met in Western Australia in the 1830s as 'active, bold, and shrewd' and 'courageous when attacked'.⁹⁵ But the conditions that produced fine 'native' men, that were seen as therapeutic for convicts and settlers of all classes, were perceived most clearly in the physique and countenance of the currency lads, Australia's 'sons of the soil'.⁹⁶

A search of early Australian newspapers shows the term 'currency lad' as current from the early 1820s, but its appearance declined rapidly in the mid 1850s and there were only three instances of its use in the 1860s. Horses, trading ships and licensed houses often carried 'Currency Lad' as a name, and it was adopted by a short-lived weekly journal in 1832.⁹⁷ It was used as a mark of approval, often as a toast at dinners,⁹⁸ and competitively in reports on boxing matches, cricket games and boat races.⁹⁹ It was worthy of note when a whaling boat's master, three officers, cooper and some of its men were all 'native Australians' which bore testimony to 'the very superior manner in

⁹³ Marcia Pointin, 'Pugilism, Painters and National Identity in Early Nineteenth-Century England', in John Gill, David Chandler, Tani Guha and Gilane Tawadros (eds), *Boxer: An Anthology of Writings on Boxing and Visual Culture*, Institute of International Visual Arts, London, 1996, p. 36; <http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/article_index/w/what_are_the_elgin_marbles.aspx>, accessed 28/1/2010.

⁹⁴ Tim Flannery (ed), *1788 Watkin Tench, Comprising A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay and A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, Text Publishing Company, Melbourne, 1996, p. 97; Eleanor Dark, 'Bennelong (1764?-1813)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010083b.htm>>, ADB, accessed 26/9/2010.

⁹⁵ Hunter, *Historical Journal*, p. 41; Hoddle, *Diary*, pp. 46-47; GF Moore, *Diary of Ten Years Eventful Life of an Early Settler in Western Australia*, M Walbrook, London, 1884, p. 35.

⁹⁶ *The Sydney Herald*, 21 February 1842.

⁹⁷ CE Sayers, 'Wills, Horatio Spencer Howe (1811-1861)', <<http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020548b.htm>>, ADB, accessed 28/1/2010.

⁹⁸ For example, see reports of dinners in *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 10 July 1823, 20 March 1832, 25 January 1838; *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser*, 27 January 1844; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 January 1846.

⁹⁹ For example, *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 26 February 1824, 3 February 1825, 23 June 1832, 31 July 1832, 3 November 1832, 22 July 1834; *The Sydney Herald*, 5 February 1838; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 March 1845.

which they acquit themselves in that arduous employ'.¹⁰⁰ And they acquitted themselves as ably at a King's birthday ball at Government House where the dancing of 'the "Currency Lads"... lost nothing by a comparison with the young gentlemen educated in the mother country'.¹⁰¹ They were noted for their spirit and courage and their 'great clannishness; – if a soldier quarrels with one, the whole hive sally to his aid'. And they were handy with their fists.¹⁰²

Views of these 'sons of the soil' were not unanimous. While William Charles Wentworth was cheered at a St Patrick's Day dinner for saying they 'exhibited abilities equal even to the sons of Hibernia',¹⁰³ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* would not publish a letter from a writer called 'Amicus' whose assessment of their character was thought unjust.¹⁰⁴ Over time, 'currency lads' moved from a term for the 'youth', 'the rising generation',¹⁰⁵ of the colonies and became a more political label, associated with republican ideals and calls for political independence. For example, when Wentworth addressed the jury in a supreme court case, he hoped the currency lads in the box would not 'be biassed or influenced by any party feeling'.¹⁰⁶ That 'currency lad' was originally coined to describe supposedly superior physical attributes to those of British men has been lost over time. When historian David Headon describes Daniel Henry Deniehy, as a 'currency lad' in his article on Deniehy's republican vision for Australia he is referring to both his birth in Sydney and his political ideals but not his physical constitution, appearance, manner or virtues.¹⁰⁷

That the opportunity for truly healthy activity is only available somewhere beyond what Adam Nicolson calls 'the cocoon-net of civilization', has been a remarkably enduring idea. It seems bound up in a notion that within the comfortable trappings of civilisation we lose touch with what our bodies are made for. Nicholson, author of popular history and travel books, writes that we treat our bodies 'either as cars – the vehicle which our brains, our selves, use to get to and from the place of work – or as pets, to be pampered, exercised, spoiled, and fed. Our bodies, most of the time, are not us'. But beyond that 'cocoon-net of civilization', '[p]hysical life becomes the life we have... We

¹⁰⁰ *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 16 October 1830.

¹⁰¹ *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 27 April 1830.

¹⁰² Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol. 2, pp. 63.

¹⁰³ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 20 March 1832.

¹⁰⁴ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 4 February 1826.

¹⁰⁵ *Colonial Times*, 6 August 1833.

¹⁰⁶ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 19 March 1835.

¹⁰⁷ David Headon, 'God's Aristocracy – Daniel Henry Deniehy's Vision of a Great Australian Republic', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 28, 1993, pp. 136-145.

know the sweet pleasures of physical exhaustion, not as an end in itself but as a by-product of making life livable'.¹⁰⁸ The physique and countenance of the 'currency lads' appeared to be evidence of the 'sweet pleasures' of the 'physical life' that the Australian colonies offered.

At the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the bodies that were made to be active, the bodies which civilisation damaged, were men's bodies. There was no similar rhetoric or discussion about women's bodies and 'currency lasses' earned no special admiration: they were 'of a mild-tempered, modest disposition, possessing much simplicity of character; and, like all children of nature, credulous, and easily led into error'.¹⁰⁹ That the term 'currency lad' moved so quickly from being associated with superior physical attributes to being associated with the political ideals of Europeans born in Australia exposes a paradox of all colonies: they are the repositories of men's expectations for material wealth and political power as much as they are for physical activity and good health. Men brought their political ideals, their towns, their sedentary occupations and their accoutrements of civilisation to Australia, replicating the circumstances in Britain that gave rise to fears for the bodies of men of all classes. Thomas Paine dedicated his *Rights of Man*: 'To George Washington... that you may enjoy the Happiness of seeing the New World regenerate the Old'.¹¹⁰ But it was never going to be that simple.

¹⁰⁸ Adam Nicolson, 'The Islands', *Geographical Review*, vol. 97 (2), April, 2007, p. 153.

¹⁰⁹ Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol. 2, p. 56.

¹¹⁰ Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man: Being an Answer to Mr. Burke's Attack on the French Revolution*, JS Jordan, London, 1791.

Chapter 2:

The ecstasies and transports of the soul – emotional journeys of self discovery

Signs of rapture, floods of tears — Maintaining our state as men — Relief, or the discharge of a necessary duty? — For mine's true, every word — The last link is about to be snapped?

There are 'plentiful' tears in *Robinson Crusoe* – tears of sorrow, despair and joy¹ – that resonated with readers later in the century, who found themselves moved by religious feeling and new sentimental novels, by the fervent emotions of the American and French Revolutions, by patriotism during wars with the French, by the loss of sons who went to war or adventuring in the colonies. Historian Paul Langford describes it as 'this age of unchained feeling'.² But emotions, 'passions', could undermine a man's well-being and manliness as effectively as sedentary lifestyles and the indulgence of luxuries. Ungoverned passions could lead to nervousness, a state that both required treatment in itself, and caused further physical maladies.³ Medical practitioners like William Buchan tended not to differentiate the problems of the mind and those of the body, observing 'a reciprocal influence betwixt the mental and corporeal parts' whereby 'whatever injures the one disorders the other'.⁴ So, the recommended treatment of nervousness and 'lowness of spirits' was the same as that for healthful living: early rising, habitual exercise, and removal from the city to the 'pure air' of 'rural scenery'.⁵ Balance, once again, was essential because nervous diseases could be 'induced either by excess or inanition'.⁶ Above all, a voyage, especially towards a warmer climate, would 'be of more service than any medicine',⁷ and the longer the journey, the better.⁸

¹ For example, Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, London, 1790 (1719), pp. 77, 346.

² Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, p. 477.

³ John Sinclair, *The Code of Health and Longevity*, G and W Nicol, London, 1818, chapter 7.

⁴ William Buchan, *Domestic Medicine*, W Strahan, T Cadell, J Balfour, W Creech, London, 1784, pp. 124-134.

⁵ *The Oracle of Health, A Penny Journal of Medical Instruction and Amusement*, 1834-1835, No 3, 5 November 1834, pp. 22-23; No 7, 3 December 1834, p. 55; No 18, 18 February 1835, p. 139-140.

⁶ William Buchan, *Domestic Medicine*, p. 327.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 325.

Other physicians and scientists working on physiological research, religious spokesmen caring for the souls of their congregations, philosophers pondering concepts such as free will and responsibility, and the doctors who specifically treated the mentally disturbed, all participated in debates about the emotional nature of man. This discourse was fuelled by a diverse range of works, like the physiognomical ideas of Johann Kaspar Lavater, the neurological theories of Robert Whytt, the mesmerism of Frantz Anton Mesmer and his British disciples, and the demonstrations of craniology or phrenology by Johann Caspar Spurzheim and Franz Joseph Gall. Religious spokesmen and philosophers, often one and the same, grappled with associationist ideas inspired by John Locke and David Hartley, with anthropological thought stimulated by encounters with 'primitive' peoples abroad, and with theories on the links between language and mind offered in writings by the likes of James Burnett and John Horne Tooke. Some of the 'mind' doctors were astute observers of psychiatric symptoms but it was much later psychiatrists and psychologists who arrived at plausible explanations for mental illness. At the turn of the nineteenth century it was writers of fiction and poetry who most successfully articulated the depths of the 'soul' or the 'self'.⁹

Thus when men followed Crusoe's example of putting their state of affairs in writing to prevent their 'thoughts from daily poring upon them, and afflicting [their] mind[s]',¹⁰ they often borrowed the themes and tropes of fiction to bring coherence to lives in which they strived to live as 'men'. As Jonathan Lamb has noted, the 'romance' of novels may have been 'openly rejected' but it was 'covertly adapted as a model of autobiography'.¹¹ These themes and tropes in men's 'self-writings' (memoirs, recollections, reminiscences and autobiographies, published and unpublished) were especially evident in the writings of British men in the Australian colonies who, as historian Alan Atkinson suggests, saw Australia as a place 'for living out a newer story, and writing was the way to do it'. 'Farewell to old England', wrote John Brown just before setting off for South Australia in 1836, 'and now for a new Life and a new Journal'.¹²

⁸ *Oracle of Health*, No 3, 5 November 1834, pp. 22-23; No 7, 3 December 1834, p. 55; No 18, 18 February 1835, p. 139-140.

⁹ Robert Brown, 'Psychology', in Iain McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 362.

¹⁰ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 81.

¹¹ Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2001, pp. 18-19.

¹² Brown quoted in Andrew Hassam, *Sailing to Australia. Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1994, p. 4; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 2 – Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2004, pp. 18, 45-47.

Atkinson describes this process as 'self-enamelling' which is an apt description when we consider that applying a coat of glass to metal under conditions of high temperature brings additional colour and life to the finished piece of art. For many men, especially those who left Britain's shores, adventure stories such as *Robinson Crusoe*, were the 'glass' that best suited the 'metal' of their lives.

We should also remember that in enamelling the glass is fused to the metal inviting us to question whether they are still separate substances, just as these men grappled with questions of action versus reflection, authenticity versus artifice, and private versus public selves. This chapter explores those struggles: how men responded to the changing register of emotional responses; how religious practice provided models for the self-regulation that might govern the passions but could itself be a source of anxiety; how the tropes of fiction provided coherence in men's self writings; how unrelenting self-examination could lead to further distress; and, how adventure could be seen as an antidote to, or an escape from, all these tensions but it inevitably led men into further strong emotions, those of home-sickness and regret. Convict and artist Thomas Watling might console himself with the belief that '[t]here are no fetters for the soul',¹³ but, as we will see, whether he resided in Britain or Australia, a man's 'soul', 'self' and 'mind' could be as restless and uneasy as his physical body.

Signs of rapture, floods of tears

The notion that emotions somehow sit outside of history is being contested by scholars who make emotions the subject of their historical analysis.¹⁴ Historian and cultural anthropologist William Reddy has outlined a framework in which to consider the historicity of emotion, and historian Peter J Stearns encourages us to consider the links

¹³ Thomas Watling, *Letters From an Exile at Botany Bay, to His Aunt in Dumfries, Giving a Particular Account of the Settlement of New South Wales, with the Customs and Manners of the Inhabitants*, Prepared from the first print edition, Ann Bell, Penrith, 1794.

¹⁴ For example: Alice Bullard, 'Sympathy and Denial: A Postcolonial Re-reading of Emotions, Race, and Hierarchy', *Historical Reflections*, vol. 34 (1), Spring, 2008, pp. 122-142; Miguel A Cabrera, Anna Fagan and Marie MacMahon, 'On Language, Culture, and Social Action', *History and Theory*, vol. 40 (4), December, 2001, pp. 82-100; Matt K Matsuda and Alice Bullard, 'Emotional Latitudes: The Ambiguities of Colonial and Post-Colonial Sentiment', *Historical Reflections*, vol. 34 (1), Spring, 2008, pp. 1-3; William M Reddy, 'The Logic of Action: Indeterminacy, Emotion, and Historical Narrative', *History and Theory*, vol. 40 (4), December, 2001, pp. 10-33; Michael Roper, 'Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 59, 2005, pp. 57-72.

between larger social arrangements and shared ways of seeing and feeling.¹⁵ Analyses such as these help us to discuss the altering emotional register at the turn of the nineteenth century. Reddy, noting that in the late eighteenth century, reason and emotion were not seen as opposed forces but in the early nineteenth they were, articulates a theory of emotions that demonstrates how they change over time, how they affect the course of events and how different social orders, and available vocabularies, either facilitate or constrain emotional life. He tests the resulting framework's use in conceiving a history of emotions in an examination of revolutionary France. Here he finds 'sentimentalism' in philosophy and literature that encouraged powerful emotional descriptions and a resulting tendency to excessive emotional expression.¹⁶

Sentimentalism, Reddy argues, was a different 'emotional common sense' from our own: It allowed emotions to be deemed as important as reason in the foundation of states and conduct of politics, such that the deliberations of the National Assembly in 1789 could be brought to a halt by 'signs of rapture and the outpouring of generous feelings'.¹⁷ The effect of sentimentalism was, perhaps, just as great in England as in France: Linda Colley notes 'a distinctively *sturm-und-drang* quality about British patrician life in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that has never been properly investigated since, a special kind of emotionalism and violence'. She nominates as examples the Earl of Chatham collapsing in the House of Lords during his last manic speech against war with America in 1778, and Edmund Burke marking his departure from the Foxite Whigs by flinging a dagger onto the floor of the House of Commons in 1792 with Charles James Fox bursting into tears in response. 'Stiff upper-class lips in this period', writes Colley, 'gave way very easily to sobs, histrionics and highly charged rhetoric'.¹⁸

The 'plentiful' tears in *Robinson Crusoe* were not confined to that story, nor to the pages of novels. Historian Robert Darnton has pointed to the amount of sobbing in both French and English literature of the eighteenth century, in Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, for example, and in Samuel Richardson's novels. Henry Mackenzie's popular *The Man of Feeling* is wet with weeping: gentlemen's

¹⁵ William M Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001; Peter N Stearns, 'Social History Update: Sociology of Emotion', *Journal of Social History*, vol. 22 (3), Spring, 1989, pp. 592-599.

¹⁶ Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, pp. 216, 171.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 182, 143, 183.

¹⁸ Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, p. 155; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, Yale University Press, London, 1992, pp. 152-152.

eyes constantly moisten, male servants breasts heave with convulsive throbs, young boys stifle their sobbing, old soldiers blubber like boys.¹⁹ The poet's brother, Francis Coleridge quoted Defoe – '*For sudden joys, like griefs, confound at first*'²⁰ – when he unexpectedly and emotionally met his brother Samuel in a foreign port.²¹ Sailor Edward Spain 'burst into a flood of tears' when he heard of his father's death towards the end of the 1770s. In 1805, gentleman convict John Grant 'burst into Tears' of gratitude and relief that someone thought as he did. Missionary Walter Lawry 'wept much' when he married Mary Hassall in 1819. And emigrant David Waugh said that a friend who was sorry to part from him 'cried like any thing as we walked along the street. Had I not tried to keep his spirits up every way I could', wrote David to his brother in 1834, 'I would have cried too'.²²

The examples quoted go well past the early nineteenth century that Reddy nominates as the onset of a 'new set of emotional norms', the point of divergence between emotion and reason which was baldly articulated by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in 1825 when he asked, 'if you are not a *thinking* man, to what purpose are you a *man* at all?'²³ They alert us to the fact that emotions do not disappear but that explicit and implicit prescription and proscription, what Reddy calls 'emotional norms', determine the vocabulary or range of expressions by which they can be conveyed. Embarrassment over the excesses of the French revolution led to a more subdued emotional register, but keeping a 'Watch' over 'Passions of every Kind... those of Joy and Satisfaction' as much as 'those of Sorrow and Anger'²⁴ had long been a requirement in being a man. It had also long been acknowledged that this 'Watch' did not come easily, it needed to be learned and fostered. William Godwin regretted the 'intemperance' of the French revolutionaries: they were 'too impatient and impetuous', and he accordingly wished to assist others in 'perfecting the melioration of their temper'.²⁵ Reddy calls such melioration a 'navigation of emotion'. He prefers the term 'navigation' rather than other

¹⁹ Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, A New Edition, John Taylor, Berwick, 1800, pp. 231, 238, 178, 171.

²⁰ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 56.

²¹ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Epistolaris*. vol 1, G Bell & Sons Ltd, London, 1911, p. 12.

²² Edward Spain, *Reminiscences, 1774-1802*, ML, C266, CY 1403; Yvonne Cramer, *This Beauteous, Wicked Place: Letters and Journals of John Grant, Gentleman Convict*, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2000, p. 147; 23 November 1819, Lawry Papers 1810-1825, ML, CY 765; David Waugh to John Waugh, 28 June 1834, Waugh Family Papers, 1834-1859, ML, A827, CY 812.

²³ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection in the Formation of a Manly Character on the Several Grounds of Prudence, Morality, and Religion*, Taylor and Hessey, London, 1825, p xi.

²⁴ Daniel Defoe, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, W Taylor, London, 1719, p. 24.

²⁵ William Godwin, *The Enquirer. Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature. In A Series Of Essays*, Robert Campbell & Co, Philadelphia, 1797, pp. vii-viii.

possibilities like 'management' because 'navigation' includes the possibility of radically changing course, although he gives the caveat that 'navigation' implies purposive action which, writes Reddy, is not always the case. However, he does concede that finding equilibrium and controlling emotion takes effort and success is rare.²⁶ The notion of 'navigating' one's emotions, the need for exertion in doing so and the prospect of failure, would have been recognised by many men during the period under discussion.

Arguably the most defining paradigm for establishing 'emotional norms' in this period was the one circumscribed by religion. The lives of the majority of people were still informed by a religious world-view, though the particulars of that religious world-view were not hegemonic. The dominance of the Church of England was challenged at the end of the eighteenth century through immigration of Roman Catholics from Ireland and Jews from continental Europe. The established church had also been confronted by a rejection of one or another aspect of its liturgy, doctrine or organisation since at least the sixteenth-century Reformation in the guise of variously labelled nonconformists – Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptist, Quakers, Unitarians, Latitudinarians, Wesleyans, Evangelicals. The quarrels that led to these distinct labels were not always benign. From the outright violence directed at John Wesley to Catholic agitation for emancipation, and the emotional conversion at the heart of Evangelicalism, religious dispute was a highly-charged emotional affair where emotion itself could be a point of contention. In 1816 Alexander Knox criticised the High Church's rejection of the mystical or emotional, arguing that they used the Prayer Book without feeling it and thus preached dull, moralising sermons resembling an 'intellectual pumping' rather than 'the gushing from the spring'.²⁷

Hymn singing did become more 'gushing'. Although congregational hymn singing was an essential part of nonconformist worship, it was almost unknown among Anglicans until the late eighteenth century when particular hymns like John Newton's 'Amazing Grace' and Robert Grant's 'Oh, Worship the King' heralded an upsurge of Anglican hymnody and were given credit for actually increasing Anglican congregations. Such hymns drew their inspiration from the Gospels and the Psalms and combined themes of death, suffering, punishment and atonement with those of sensibility, fortitude,

²⁶ Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, pp. 216, 122.

²⁷ AB Webster, *Joshua Watson: The Story of a Layman 1771-1855*, SPCK, London, 1954, p. 22.

compassion and the sublime power of nature.²⁸ They were also full of 'trembling hearts', 'troubled breasts',²⁹ and 'tempest tossed' souls,³⁰ 'tokens of passion', 'endless exultation', and 'rapture'.³¹ Despite these hymns' promises of release and deliverance – 'My chains fell off, my heart was free'³² – theological angst, doctrinal disputes and religious intolerance meant that the 'terminological swamp'³³ of religion was as ambiguous a guide for men as popular medical literature. But its influence remained far-reaching. Even among the often irreligious convicts in the Australian colonies, religious language was a feature of their letters home, a feature that is not sufficiently explained as the imposition of unknown scribes assisting illiterate prisoners. Such language was used to cover an inadequate personal vocabulary for expressing emotions like fear and grief, and its use did not deny genuine feeling or the importance of religion in these men's lives:³⁴ religion was a useful guide in the 'navigation of emotion'.

Maintaining our state as men

Unsurprisingly, the individual depth of the religious world-view and its emotional intensity varied among men. It could be a visceral response, as for Absalom Watkins when he 'felt the power and goodness of the Creator' in a magnificent Lancashire sunrise (his underlining), or a serious somatic and intellectual struggle as Farqhar Mackenzie expressed it to his journal while sheep farming in New South Wales. 'I must learn to think clearly...' he wrote, 'to govern my mind & passions, & to devote to this purpose a certain space out of every 24 hours during which time I must endeavour to exclude worldly thoughts' and 'impress upon my mind the truths of Christianity'. It could be a customary acknowledgement, as when Robert Johnson credited God for his large portion of happiness in life, or a lightly-worn principle as William Hutton found. His was the only Dissenting family connected with the mill at which he was apprenticed. A clerk bent on converting him to the established church gave him a halfpenny every Sunday

²⁸ Suzanne Rickard, 'Hymondy', in Iain McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 552.

²⁹ Charles Wesley, 'Love divine, all loves excelling'.

³⁰ Anglican Bishop Reginald Heber, 'Forth from the dark and stormy sky'.

³¹ Charles Wesley, 'Come, thou long expected Jesus'.

³² Charles Wesley, 'And can it be that I should gain'.

³³ RK Webb, 'Religion', in Iain McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 93.

³⁴ Bruce Hindmarsh, 'Wherever I go I will right to you' in Lucy Frost and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart (eds), *Chain Letters: Narrating Convict Lives*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001, pp. 173-174.

he attended church and Hutton's father 'who was a moderate man, winked at the purchase'. Faith was often acutely present in moments of weakness, doubt and terror, as in Robinson Crusoe's illness-induced dream, in John Nicol's similar ill-health, and an 'intelligent' settler's, awakening 'to a consideration of the importance of eternal things' after his own shipwreck.³⁵

Conversely faith could be less present when life was going well: Benjamin Robert Haydon sent his children to church one Sunday, but did not read prayers to himself, the reason being that he 'felt no want of God's protection and forgot his past mercies'. For men such as the habitual thief Snowden Dunhill, the extent of their spiritual reflection might extend only to 'presentiments' of foreboding that they had from time to time. Nor was faith always unquestioned or uncritically accepted. Crusoe found his 'religious thankfulness to God's providence began to abate' when he discovered that his small barley crop was not a miracle but the result of his emptying a bag of chicken feed. Daniel Southwell often reflected on the 'the mysterious Dealings of Providence' but understood his 'Fretting' did not appropriately express a 'Christian Resignation'. Even Absalom Watkin's grateful response to a sunrise did not protect him from anxiety that his religious belief needed a firmer intellectual foundation.³⁶

Invariably, debates about religious observance were pursued in terms of appropriate manly behaviour. The Reverend Richard Prosser made this clear in a sermon to the House of Commons in 1801. Vices, pleasures, amusements and the 'principles of business' were more than impediments to the care of the religious soul, they also imperiled 'our social happiness, and our national eminence' at the heart of which was men's 'state as men'. 'If we wish to maintain our state as men', preached Prosser, 'we must return to the performance of our duty as Christians'.³⁷ But men's 'state as men'

³⁵ Magdalen Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993, p. 133; 19 October 1837, Captain Robert Johnson, *Diaries*, ESRO, AMS 5848/1; Farquhar Mackenzie, *Journal*, ML, A1291, CY1808; William Hutton, *The Life of William Hutton, F.A.S.S. including a Particular Account of The Riots of Birmingham in 1791, to Which is Subjoined, The History of His Family, Written by Himself, and Published by His Daughter Catherine Hutton*, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, London, 1816, p. 13; Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, pp. 109-122; John Nicol, *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol Mariner*, Cassell & Company, London, 1937 (1822), p. 51; James Backhouse, *A Narrative of A Visit to the Australian Colonies*, Johnson Reprint Edition 1967, Hamilton, Adams and Co, London, 1843, p. 453.

³⁶ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century with an Introduction on Diary Writing*, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1923, p. 256; Snowden Dunhill, *The Life of Snowden Dunhill of Spaldington, East Riding (1766-1838). A Reprint of the Abridged Life of Snowden Dunhill*, Mr Pye (Books), Howden, 1987 (c1835), p. 17; Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 98; Letter 7 – 12 July 1788, Letter 16 – 27 July 1790, Letters from D Southwell, concerning New South Wales, 1787-1790, BL, MS ADD 16383; Goffin (ed), *Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, p. 8.

³⁷ A sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Westminster on Friday, February 13, 1801, being the day appointed for a general fast.

could be compromised by the sorts of ungoverned passions that genuine religious feeling could arouse. To counter this perception, Evangelicals appropriated the vocabulary of physical manliness – words like sturdy, vigorous, robust – to define the ideals of moral virtue so that courage was more about standing up for what was right than about physical daring.³⁸ But language can only go so far and Evangelical manhood, with its stress on self-sacrifice, came dangerously close to embracing ‘feminine’ qualities.³⁹

One resolution of these tensions was found in the figure of the missionary, which Martin Green describes as ‘a point of juncture between the Crusoe story and the evangelical movement’. This juncture comes in Johan David Wyss’ *Der Schweizerische Robinson* (*Swiss Family Robinson*, 1812). Wyss apparently referred to the manuscript, as *Charakteristik meiner Kinder in einer Robinsade* (a characterisation of my children in the form of a Robinsonade). The father of the story is a pastor setting out to become a missionary in Tahiti, a detail of only passing importance in the story but, according to Green, of significance ‘in the history of the Western imagination’. The London Missionary Society was founded seventeen years before the publication of *Swiss Family Robinson* and their first missionaries arrived in Tahiti in 1797. Of the thirty men in the party, only four were ordained ministers. The others were trained in English technical skills. There was a draper, a butcher, a weaver, a tailor, a hatter, a bricklayer, a carpenter: all aspects of the Crusoe figure. This missionary expedition was as much a colonising party as an evangelising one. And there is some evidence that Defoe’s book, along with Bunyan and the Bible, was favorite reading among them.⁴⁰

The missionary was a figure of the highest possible moral virtue that retained the adventurous spirit and physical courage of older expectations of manliness as well as newer expectations of resourcefulness through manual training, such as Jean Jacques Rousseau favoured.⁴¹ Missionaries, Richard Johnson declared in his diary, exemplified the virtue still left in his ‘dear countrymen’ that would save them from ‘the three great

By Richard Prosser, D.D. Rector of Gateshead, Durham, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1801 (002), pp. 14-16.

³⁸ John Tosh, *A Man’s Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*, Yale University Press, London, 1999, p. 112.

³⁹ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, Routledge, London, 2002, p.111.

⁴⁰ Martin Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, 1990, pp. 65-72.

⁴¹ Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Émile*, JM Dent, London, 1974 (1762), p. 158.

evils of the present day viz. Popery, Socialism and Chartism'.⁴² Importantly, said Hannah More, missionaries should be armed with reason, the ability to explain the grounds on which the Christian religion can be proved, rather than relying on the emotional response to miracles. '[T]here is no other mode of bringing conviction to the mind, but *by a chain of reasoning*' (italics in original).⁴³

In the early Australian colonies, isolation from the physical and metaphysical structures and rhythms of organised religion added to the uncertainty, perhaps even irrelevance, of religious experience especially among the convicts. A clergyman in the colonies, wrote Henry William Haygarth in 1848, 'would have an arduous, and often a repulsive task before him... He must proceed, like the Vicar of Wakefield in his prison, fortified by hope alone'.⁴⁴ This was certainly the experience of the first clergyman in New South Wales, the Reverend Richard Johnson who arrived in 1788 and returned home twelve years later 'exhausted with the effort' as historian Alan Atkinson describes it.⁴⁵ Johnson faced more than irreligious convicts. Soldiers and sailors of all ranks were not notably religious and some were inclined to troublesome interference with Sunday services. A considerable minority of the convicts were Catholics from Ireland who were unfamiliar with the vernacular of Protestant worship. And the books Johnson handed out were not always treated with piety but sold for liquor or used for waste paper. Johnson did not even have a building dedicated to worship until he built one himself in 1793 with the limited resources and labour he could find. This was burnt down five years later by a convict or convicts 'unnamed', apparently in resentment at Governor John Hunter's introduction of compulsory church attendance in 1796.⁴⁶

Quaker missionary James Backhouse's account of his travels in Australia in the early 1830s gave an anecdotal audit of religious observance in the colonies which shows how uneven practices were. Some experiences gave him hope. He was struck with the 'quietness and attention' paid him by four hundred and fifty prisoners to whom he

⁴² 11 March 1840, Johnson, Diaries.

⁴³ 20 June 1820, Mrs Frowd on behalf of an ill Hannah More to John Sinclair, *The Correspondence of The Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair, Bart. With Reminiscences of the Most Distinguished Characters Who Have Appeared in Great Britain, and in Foreign Countries, During the Last Fifty Years*, Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, London, 1831, p. 46.

⁴⁴ Henry William Haygarth, *Recollections of Bush Life in Australia, During a Residence of Eight Years in the Interior*, John Murray, London, 1848, p. 32.

⁴⁵ Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 175.

⁴⁶ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, pp. 174-181; George Mackaness, *Some Letters of Rev. Richard Johnson, B.A. First Chaplain of New South Wales, Collected and Edited, With Introduction, Notes and Commentary, In Two Parts, Part II.*, Reprint edition, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1954 (1978), pp. 22-25.

preached: 'notwithstanding many of them wore chains, the least clink was rarely to be heard'. But for every convict who found God on escaping the gallows, and free settler like Isaac Shepherd, who had prospered 'temporally' and 'grown in grace' during his forty-two years in the colony, there was a free servant who ignored religious services, and a settler that neglected religious ritual.⁴⁷ As for Robinson Crusoe, who ceased 'keeping *Sundays*' once he omitted marking them on his post,⁴⁸ isolation from society's influence and the struggles of settler life made observances like the daily reading of scriptures difficult. Unfortunately, lack of religious feeling was as harmful to men's 'state as men' as the potential excesses of emotion in religious observance or the expressions of sensibility. Both could mean a loss of manly reason and responsibility.⁴⁹

Relief, or the discharge of a necessary duty?

Literature specialist Felicity Nussbaum has told us that during the eighteenth century 'self', 'identity', 'soul' and 'person' were 'dangerous and disputed formations, subject to appropriation by various interests'. Rhetorical battles beginning with Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* in 1694, and running through the works of Joseph Priestley, Catherine Cockburn Turner, Joseph Butler, Anthony Collins, David Hume, and Hester Thrale struggled with issues of 'self, consciousness and substance, as fixed or fleeting, fiction or fact'.⁵⁰ There was a pervasive sense that this new 'self' was precarious. Alain Corbin credits this to the insecurity that accompanied the increasing social mobility of the time. Kathleen Wilson sees it as a result of unsettling questions of national identity, itself a consequence of the conflicts, ambiguities and desires arising from the assumption of imperial power and colonial territories. Nussbaum finds it in the 'uneasy resolutions' that the 'bourgeois gendered self' negotiated in the face of 'ideological contradictions', the need for 'self-regulation', and 'fluctuating boundaries of self-interest'.⁵¹ As for the self-control needed to maintain health, men had to learn this

⁴⁷ Backhouse, *Narrative of A Visit*, pp. 33, 279, 450, 125, 513.

⁴⁸ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 90.

⁴⁹ Michèle Cohen, "'Manners' Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830", *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 44 (April), 2005, p. 328; Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800*, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, England, 2001, p. 132.

⁵⁰ Felicity A Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989, pp. 38-46.

⁵¹ Alain Corbin, 'Cries and Whispers', in Michelle Perrot (ed), *A History of Private Life: From the Fires of Revolutions to the Great Wars*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1990, p. 615; Kathleen Wilson (ed), *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, p. 4; Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, p. 57.

'self'-regulation and their diaries, often explicitly begun to assist them in the self-examination required for spiritual care, reveal the struggle that this caused.

The need for self-regulation, however, was not new and was not only the result of a precarious sense of 'self'. Religion, especially dissenting sects such as the Quakers, Baptists, and Methodists, used conversion narratives and private self-scrutiny to govern themselves and each other.⁵² This spiritual self-examination was of the same order as the physical self-control that we saw in chapter one. William Windham's diaries articulate his endeavours at length. A member of the House of Commons from 1785 and of the Cabinet at the turn of the century, Windham recorded his sleep patterns as often as his mathematical musings and regularly debated with himself about the best times for rising and exercising. Self-doubt – over the time he took to write effectively, his speech-making abilities and whether he was more productive at home or in company – is a running theme in his daily reflections.⁵³ Diplomat James Harris' diaries between 1767 and 1820 were initially typical of diplomatic diaries filled with visits, travel, functions, dinners, conversations and anecdotes, but from 1809 until his death in 1820 he kept a very pious 'Self controlling Journal'.⁵⁴ Richard Hurrell Froude began his diary in 1826 when he was a twenty-three year old tutor at Oriel College, Oxford. It is a record of self-condemnation and attempts at self-discipline with occasional prayers. Froude thought he would benefit from writing a journal as, he wrote, 'I find I want keeping in order'.⁵⁵

Self-examination and self-regulation slipped easily from the religious to the secular, from the care of the soul to the care of the 'self'. But as the religious examples made clear, this scrutiny needed to be learned. Publications like Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, first published in 1825, could assist men of 'all classes' who wished for 'aid in disciplining their minds to habits of reflection', those men, 'desirous of building up a manly character in the light of distinct consciousness', especially young men, 'at the close of their education or on their first entrance into the duties of manhood and the rights of self-government', and particularly those who are to dedicate 'their future lives to the cultivation of their race, as pastors, preachers, missionaries, or instructors of youth'. Coleridge admitted that 'self-superintendence', that 'anything should overlook itself, is a 'paradox', yet 'most truly does the poet exclaim,/– Unless

⁵² Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, p. 19.

⁵³ William Windham, *The Diary of the Right Hon. William Windham 1784-1810*, Mrs Henry Baring (ed), Longmans Green and Co, London 1866: for example pp. 4, 6, 52, 82, 23-24, 155, 303.

⁵⁴ Ponsonby, *English Diaries*, pp. 234-235.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 363.

above himself he can/ Erect himself, how mean a thing is man!’⁵⁶ That self-reflection was a habit that needed to be learned and practiced alerts us to the limits of this sort of behaviour. As James Backhouse found, he had to ‘labour’ to turn the attention of his small congregation ‘to the importance of self-examination’.⁵⁷

Thus, while Byron wrote ‘[t]his journal is a relief’, young sailor Daniel Southwell found the whole business of writing less than a pleasure, but rather ‘a necessary Discharge of Duty’.⁵⁸ Many other diary writers concurred: a self-superintending diary could just as easily be a source of distraction, discomfort, and even discontent. A diary was a vessel into which a man could pour the hopes and fears that he may not have been able to confide to other people. As Absalom Watkin’s biographer concluded, it ‘served as a safety valve’.⁵⁹ So GF Moore’s diary, begun on leaving home for Western Australia to satisfy the curiosity of family and friends, became ‘a great source of relief and consolation’ not only during the voyage, but also ‘through all the difficulties, dangers, labours, and eventful incidents, for the space of ten years in the colony’, and Robert Johnson’s ‘unremitting self examination’ enabled him to contemplate getting older without dread. But a draper’s assistant named Strother, first name unknown, wrote at the end of his journal that perhaps he ‘shall not fill another’. Strother kept a diary over the course one year between 1784 and 1785. He thought it would aid his memory and give him pleasure on rereading, but ‘I have learnt by keeping this Journal’, he wrote, ‘that I have been discontent more than was profitable and that it is not proper for a Tradesman to keep a Journal without he has enough of Time and plentiful (sic) fortune’. Charles Greville found that a record of his activities was a constant reminder of his ‘dissolute’ and ‘foolish’ ways. At one point in 1830 it had been a month since he had written a line; instead he was ‘always idleness’. Reflecting on his wasted time made him ‘very uncomfortable’: ‘I am ready to cry with vexation when I think of my misspent life’.⁶⁰

Henry Fynes Clinton was not sure that reflection and self-examination in diary writing was ‘beneficial’ at all: ‘Many evil thoughts’, he wrote,

⁵⁶ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, 6th edition, William Pickering, London, 1848, pp. xv-xvi, 5. The ‘poet’ may have been Seneca.

⁵⁷ Backhouse, *Narrative of A Visit*, p. 351.

⁵⁸ Byron quoted in Ponsonby, *English Diaries*, p. 264; Letters from D Southwell.

⁵⁹ Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, p. 172.

⁶⁰ GF Moore, *Diary of Ten Years Eventful Life of an Early Settler in Western Australia*, M Walbrook, London, 1884, p. vi; 26 May 1821, Johnson, *Diaries*; Ponsonby, *English Diaries*, pp. 237, 241, 275.

that would pass away from the mind are arrested in their passage, fixed in the attention and made permanent by the habit of noting them down. Many transient uneasinesses too are magnified in importance by being registered in the journal and a morbid sensibility generated; thus we become less satisfied with our condition and with those who surround us.⁶¹

Clinton concluded that it might be 'safer' to 'abstain from setting down subjects that try the passions deeply' and 'confine a journal to a mere diary of facts'.⁶² This was the advice of the Royal Society on keeping a travel journal (write daily, in a clear, plain style, forego moral judgements, and rewrite as scientifically objective narrative 'histories' once the travel was completed)⁶³ and of Christopher Claxton in his *Naval Monitor* ('Containing Many Useful Hints For Both the Public and Private Conduct of the Young Gentlemen In, or Entering, That Profession...').⁶⁴ Many men seemed to concur, thus the extent of self-reflection in their diaries and journals varied as much as their religious observance. This seemed particularly the case for those men who ventured out to the Australian colonies, yet even those men who avoided the examination of 'passions' were attempting to make sense of, and bring order to their lives.

In one of his first journal entries for 1787, gentleman farmer John Grainger gave an account of an altercation with his wife. The tailor had visited with questions about buttons for his coat and after he left, 'Mrs G ask me were was the Taylor I told her he was gone and then called me a great thick headed fellow and told me I was fit to do nothing at the window. I told her she was a good for nothing Hussey and threaten to strike me twice if I did not go a long upstairs. I told her if she struck me I would knock her down. To avoid words I come upstairs'.⁶⁵ It was a tantalising beginning to a series of journals, made of rough paper bound with string, but for the next ten years Grainger never revealed anything intimate again. Rather, he seemed to follow William Cobbett's advice of putting down 'something every day in the year, if it be merely a description of the weather'.⁶⁶ When men following this advice did reveal details other than the

⁶¹ Ponsonby, *English Diaries*, p. 11.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶³ Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740*, 2nd edition, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2002, p. 101-105.

⁶⁴ Christopher Claxton, *The Naval Monitor; Containing Many Useful Hints For Both the Public and Private Conduct of the Young Gentlemen In, or Entering, That Profession, In All Its Branches.*, 2nd edition, AJ Valpy, London, 1833, pp. 190-195.

⁶⁵ Saturday 13 January, John Grainger, Diaries, WSRO, ASS MSS 30721-30728.

⁶⁶ William Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men, and (Incidentally) to Young Women, in the Middle and Higher Ranks of Life. In a Series of Letters to a Youth, a Bachelor, a Lover, a Husband, a Father, a Citizen or a Subject*, Henry Frowde, London, 1906 (1829), p. 81.

weather, it was likely to be of the complaint or 'shopkeeping' variety than to be of spiritual enquiry or self discovery.⁶⁷ 'Gloomy weather', wrote George Boyle White in New South Wales, 'I may say every thing is gloomy with me'. And on another day: 'dry, dry, dry – damnedably dry – and blowing as if the devil had placed a fresh hand at the bellows to blow us all into hell'.⁶⁸

Farming journals, like John Grainger's, were numerous, especially in the Australian colonies. Alexander Thomson in Hobart Town made short entries every two or three days about the weather, purchase and sale of livestock, work being carried out and names of the men that he saw.⁶⁹ George Wyndham recorded ten years, 1830 to 1840, of farming activity in the Hunter River valley of New South Wales. There are brief descriptions of building the farm house and planting crops, vegetables and fruit. He tracked how these and his children grew and fared. He noted visitors received and visits made as well as the weather, water levels in the lagoon and creek, and summaries of produce yields. The Henty brothers, James and Francis, kept very similar diaries in the Portland Bay area. All of these show the novelty of the Australian environment and the importance of records when encountering and domesticating the unfamiliar.⁷⁰

Though male settlers such as the Hentys and George Wyndham, and particularly their sons the 'currency lads', were not self-reflective in their journals, we cannot assume that this is evidence of a lack of self-awareness or emotional struggle. It may be that the physical life of the settler did ameliorate some of men's anxieties. David Waugh seemed to make that connection: 'It would take a great deal to bring me back to the writing desk again,' he wrote home, 'I feel such an expansion of mind, – such exhilaration of spirits, – and such a complete freedom from anxiety, except on your account, – that I feel quite a new man.'⁷¹ It is almost certain that their lives left little time for diary writing. Charles Boydell had been in New South Wales for around four years and had just taken up his own 'Farm' when he committed to the page: 'I C Boydell

⁶⁷ Dan Doll and Jessica Munns, 'Introduction', in Dan Doll and Jessica Munns (ed), *Recording and Reordering: Essays on the Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Diary and Journal*, Bucknall University Press, Lewisburg, 2006, p. 14.

⁶⁸ 14 June 1844, 4 August 1845, George Boyle White, Journals, 1827-1845, ML, B 600, CY 4723.

⁶⁹ Alexander Thomson, Diary at Hobart Town, SLV, MS 9127, MSB 454.

⁷⁰ George Wyndham, Diary, ML, MSS 1946/1-2, B1313, CY 859; Francis Henty, Diary, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7739, Box 118/5(a); James Henty, Diary, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS 7739, Box 117/3.

⁷¹ James Waugh, *Three Years' Practical Experience of a Settler in New South Wales; Being Extracts from Letters to His Friends in Edinburgh, From 1834 to 1837*, 5th edition, John Johnstone, Edinburgh, 1838, p. 27.

having just entered upon my twenty second year & wishing to turn discrete, regular and steady have commenced a journal thinking that nothing can be more conducive to improvement than retrospect'. Twelve months later he noted that more than a month had elapsed since opening his journal.⁷²

Daniel Henry Deniehy did leave diaries and letters in which glimpses of similar uneasiness to his urban, educated counterparts in Britain can be found. Deniehy's parents had both been transported, yet they were able to take him to England for further education and European travel. By 1856 Deniehy had a legal practice in Goulburn, a charming residence, a new daughter and a successful business. 'This is all well enough', he wrote to John Armstrong, 'but between ourselves, I am pretty nigh as full of anxieties and apprehensions as ever'. Although he made a 'good deal' of money it was never enough. But 'worst of all' in his 'struggling for existence, the golden hours for the mental and spiritual study and experiences which are to fit a man for doing something of the great and good in his generation are melting sadly and rapidly away'.⁷³

For mine's true, every word

William Adeney's farming journal became a travel account when he began preparing for his 'voyage to Australia' in 1842. Variations to the Henty farming diaries occurred when James started notes on a trip to France in 1825, and when father Thomas Henty sailed for Van Diemen's Land in 1831. In the long tradition of travel diaries, Thomas Henty's was full of the delight of the new: of goose and plum pudding for Christmas dinner while porpoises swam alongside; of sighting a pirate ship and 'Casting Musket balls', determined to fight for the ship.⁷⁴ Samuel Smith was the lowest rank of seaman who sailed with Matthew Flinders on the *Investigator* in 1801. His journal is similarly full of the wonder of whales, sharks, stingrays, turtles and porpoises rolling in great number, as well as the minutiae of work on a ship, and the drama of their shipwreck in

⁷² 1 March 1830, 27 April 1831, Charles Boydell, Journal, ML, A2014, CY 1496.

⁷³ January 1856, Daniel Henry Deniehy – letters, 1833-1860, written to John Armstrong, with a prospectus of 'The Southern Cross', 1859, notes on Deniehy's burial and pencil notes by C.H. Bertie, ca.1921, ML, MSS 869, CY 4832.

⁷⁴ William Adeney, Diary, SLV, MS 9185, MSB 21; James Henty, Notes made on a trip to France in 1825, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7793, Box 118/3; Thomas Henty, Diary, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS 7739, Box 117/1.

the Torres Strait.⁷⁵ Smith's journal is more colourfully spelled but not dissimilar in its content to the journals of members of the First Fleet. Some of these were published at the time, with arrangements made by publishers with potential authors before they left England. So Watkin Tench's *A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay...*, Governor Arthur Phillip's *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay*, John White's illustrated journal, John Hunter's official journal and David Collins' account all appeared in the 1790s. These were joined in the new century by countless diaries of emigrants who spent shipboard hours recording their experience of the voyage for themselves and family and friends if not for publication.⁷⁶ There was an eager reading audience for accounts of time spent in the early Australian colonies, even the experience of transportees: John Vaux's memoirs of 'a swindler and a thief' went to at least three editions.⁷⁷

What many of these diaries, voyage and travel accounts, both published and unpublished, had in common is a certain fictive quality, especially in their use of adventure tropes, as even just their titles illustrated: for example, *The Life and Adventures of E Snell*, 1859, and Charles Rowcroft's *Tales of The Colonies; Or, The Adventures of an Emigrant*, 1845.⁷⁸ They also insisted on being read as 'true'. The opening to James Demarr's *Adventures in Australia Fifty Years Ago* illustrated both these points. In his 'early youth' he wanted to escape his father's farm and his 'strongest inclination was to travel and see the world'. That feeling, he wrote, 'was fostered and encouraged by reading books on voyages and travels'. He wished 'the reader' however, 'to clearly understand that there is nothing fictitious in this book'.⁷⁹ Letters home also adopted the tropes of published works. Convict letters talked of the dangers of bad company and alcohol in much the same way as criminal biographies, fictional and non-fictional. Historian Bruce Hindmarsh calls these letters 'a form of

⁷⁵ Samuel Smith, *Sailing with Flinders: The Journal of Seaman Samuel Smith*, Corkwood Press, Adelaide, 1813 (2002), for example, pp. 27, 53, 28-29, 65-69.

⁷⁶ Malcolm D Prentis, 'Haggis on the High Seas: Shipboard Experiences of Scottish Emigrants to Australia, 1821-1897', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 36 (124), 2004, p. 296.

⁷⁷ James Hardy Vaux, *Memoirs of James Hardy Vaux, A Swindler and Thief*, Whittaker, Treacher, and Arnot, London, 1830; Averil F Fink, 'Vaux, James Hardy (1782-1841+)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020503b.htm>>, ADB, accessed 2/2/2010; Popular titles included: Anon, *A Month in the Bush of Australia*, J Cross, Simpkin and Marshall, London, 1838; Peter Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vols. 1 & 2, Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1827 (1966); T Horton James, *Six Months in Australia*, J. Cross, London, 1838; John Mitchel, *Jail Journal*, MH Gill and Son Ltd, Dublin, 1913 (1854).

⁷⁸ Doll and Munns, 'Introduction', p. 13; Edward Snell, *Life and Adventures*; Charles Rowcroft, *Tales of The Colonies; Or, The Adventures of an Emigrant*, 3rd edition, Smith, Elder and Co, London, 1845 (1843).

⁷⁹ James Demarr, *Adventures in Australia Fifty Years Ago*, Swan Sonnenschein and Co, London, 1893, pp. iii, 3.

autobiography in progress'. Hindmarsh argues 'such forms were appropriate because they had cultural meaning for both writer and reader'.⁸⁰

It was understandable that published journals, organised and edited for a broad audience, would use the structures and tropes of adventure stories, but it can also be explained for unpublished diaries. Their fictive quality is not simply a result of how we 'read' diaries, that is our employment of familiar strategies of understanding, description and narrative. It is also because what diarists themselves read teaches them how to write about events; they imitate the forms of story and life telling they already know.⁸¹ This is as much the case for works of self-control and self-discovery as it is for travel diaries. Models for introspection came from characters in popular novels, such as Walter Scott's vulnerable young men on journeys of self-discovery, and a long tradition of travel literature gave guidance to writers of travel diaries. Specific models were likely to have been *Pilgrim's Progress*, 1678, and *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719, the most widely-read journey-stories outside of the Bible, though it seems volumes of Cook's voyages were to be found alongside them even in working-class households.⁸²

The conflation of influences from both fictional and historical, or more 'factual' sources, is pervasive through all forms of self-writing. Despite agriculturalist Arthur Young's clear desire to follow the Royal Society's directions for travel narratives, the published version of his travels in France is more than the spontaneous transcription of daily observations and occurrences.⁸³ When recounting narrow escapes his language recalls the knight errantry of Don Quixote or the pirate tales of Defoe, and the overall effect is less of an eye-witness account than something reminiscent of the fictional works of Swift, Smollett and Sterne.⁸⁴ Soldier Moyle Sherer wrote his *Recollections of The Peninsula* as a 'man of feeling', directly referencing Henry Mackenzie's highly sentimental and very successful novel of that name. Sailor Edward Spain disingenuously told the imagined 'Courteous Reader' of his unpublished reminiscences that they were not going to find 'miraculous escapes from shipwreck nor dwelling a number of years alone in a desolate Island'. And James Boswell's early diaries were

⁸⁰ Bruce Hindmarsh, 'Wherever I go', p. 173.

⁸¹ Doll and Munns, 'Introduction', p. 14.

⁸² Brian Hamnett, 'Fictitious Histories: The Dilemma of Fact and Imagination in the Nineteenth-Century Historical Novel', *European History Quarterly*, vol. 36 (1), 2006, pp. 32-39; Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*, pp. 83-84; David Vincent, *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Working Class Autobiography*, Methuen & Co, London, 1982, p. 110.

⁸³ Terry Reilly, 'Arthur Young's *Travels in France*: Historicity and the Use of Literary Forms', in Doll and Munns (eds), *Recording and Reordering*, p. 123-124; McKeon, *Origins of the English Novel*, p. 110.

⁸⁴ Reilly, 'Arthur Young's *Travels in France*', pp. 126-134.

imbued with the heroic tropes of the very popular eighteenth-century version of the *Odyssey*, Fénelon's *Télémaque*.⁸⁵

This blending of romance, adventure and autobiography has bemused later readers for whom a distinction between literal truth and imaginative truth was possible but such a distinction would have puzzled the authors themselves.⁸⁶ David Hume conceived of men's personal identity as a 'bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed after each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement'.⁸⁷ Jonathan Lamb has perceptively observed that in the face of this, the urge for what he terms 'self preservation' probably rendered 'the distinction between true and false temporarily meaningless'. Nussbaum describes these writers' approach more as a 'retreat from more immediate and inarticulate feelings to generalise them into a supposedly universal paradigm of emotion', a transformation of literary analogues into 'familiar ideological filters' that give 'meaning' to 'daily jottings'.⁸⁸

Further 'meaning' was given to daily jottings when diaries became autobiographies which themselves became guides for would-be diarists. Memoirs, recollections, reminiscences and autobiographies were enormously popular at the turn of the nineteenth century and their ubiquity as a genre can be gauged by the fact that the word 'autobiography' was first coined in 1797 (by William Taylor in the *Quarterly Review*). Robert Southey was hardly exaggerating when he described his time as one in which 'booksellers, public lecturers, pickpockets, and poets become autobiographers'. While Wordsworth came up with his creative autobiography in *The Prelude*, and Coleridge put his major statement of theory in autobiographical form in *Biographia Literaria*, John Webster wrote his reminiscences at the age of ninety from

⁸⁵ Moyle Sherer, *Recollections of The Peninsula*, 5th edition, Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, London, 1827, p. 126; Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, p. 104; Spain, *Reminiscences*, 1774-1802, p. 104.

⁸⁶ James F O'Connell, *A Residence of Eleven Years in New Holland and the Caroline Islands*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1972, p. 50; George Sampson, *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1953, p. 839; Martin A Danahay, *A Community of One: Masculine Autobiography and Autonomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1993, pp. 13-14.

⁸⁷ David Hume, 'A Treatise of Human Nature. Being an Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects. Book 1. Of The Understanding. Part IV. Section VI. Of Personal Identity', in David Hume, *The Philosophical Works of David Hume*, Adam and Charles Black, Edinburgh, 1854 (1739-40), pp. 310-320. Repeated by Ralph Waldo Emerson in 'Self-reliance': 'Travelling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home I dream at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from': quoted in Robert Ulich (ed), *Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom: Selections from Great Documents*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1948, pp. 610-611.

⁸⁸ Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, p. 75; Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, p. 104.

notebooks he had kept in Australia and New Zealand in earlier years, and James Demarr's fondness for 'journalizing' was turned into a book of 'adventure' when he wrote up his diaries on return from the Australia colonies.⁸⁹ Evangelicals and Methodists recounted their spiritual conversion and growth, autodidacts told of their journeys from ignorance to knowledge, and criminals used their life stories as warnings to readers.⁹⁰ The publication of Rousseau's *Confessions* in English translation between 1783 and 1790 supported the diarist's notion that solitude and reflection could lead to self-knowledge, and confirmed that self writing was an activity of as much interest to readers as writers.⁹¹

Convict autobiographies, with their clear literary model in eighteenth-century criminal biographies, were especially popular and they made their way into octavos, broadsides, newspapers and government reports in the form of verse, ballads and novels.⁹² Like so many other autobiographies, convicts made claims to both veracity and adventure.⁹³ And, like so many other autobiographies and the fictional works on which they were modeled, the result was an ambiguous mix of 'fact' and fiction. The *Memoirs of James Hardy Vaux, A Swindler and Thief* are especially overt. Opposite the title page is a passage from Don Quixote which includes the quote, 'For mine's true, every word, and no invented stories can compare with it for variety of tricks and accidents'. Vaux said that his grandparents did not approve of him spending time reading at the booksellers because he might 'inculcate romantic notions of men and manners'. It was to no avail however: by page five '[l]ike Robinson Crusoe', Vaux 'felt a strong predilection for rambling into foreign countries, and had a longing desire to go to sea'. The introduction, by 'BF', gives no assistance to the reader who is told to 'believe as much or little as he pleases of the following story'.⁹⁴ Thomas Crofton Croker, a senior clerk in the British Admiralty, regretted his involvement in the editing of

⁸⁹ William Wordsworth, *The Prelude: Or, Growth of a Poet's Mind, An Autobiographical Poem*, D Appleton & Company, New York, 1850; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria, Vol. I*, William Pickering, London, 1847 (1817); John Webster, *Reminiscences of an Old Settler in Australian and New Zealand*, Southern Bookbinding, New Zealand, 1908, p. 294; Demarr returned in 1846, but his account was not published until 1893: Demarr, *Adventures in Australia Fifty Years Ago*, p. iv.

⁹⁰ John Mee, 'Autobiography', in McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, p. 411; Samuel Bamford, *Early Days*, Simpkin, Marshall and Co, London, 1849; Dunhill, *The Life*, p. 9.

⁹¹ Larry Wolff, 'Then I Imagine a Child: The Idea of Childhood and the Philosophy of Memory in the Enlightenment', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 31 (4), 1998, p. 389.

⁹² For example, William Dale, *The Unhappy Transport: Or, The Sufferings of William Dale, Son of a Farmer and Gardener*, printed and sold by J Catnach, broadside, 183-?, SLNSW, digital order no. a016.

⁹³ Lisa Christine Jenkins, *Offending Lives: Subjectivity and Australian Convict Autobiographies, 1788-1899*, PhD Thesis, Stanford University, 2002, ML, MSS 7107. p. 95, 97.

⁹⁴ Vaux, *Memoirs*, pp. vii, 4-5.

transported Irish rebel Joseph Holt's autobiography. He encouraged a scathing review of the book in the *Dublin University Magazine* so that it 'would demolish Holt's history, or at least render it as veritable as that of Robinson Crusoe'.⁹⁵ As 'veritable' as Robinson Crusoe, however, would have been unclear to many readers when a child's book in 1827 claimed that '[t]he history of Robinson Crusoe... is neither entirely fact nor entirely fiction, and James O'Connell's 'real life' account of *A Residence of Eleven Years in New Holland and the Caroline Islands* in 1836 included sea voyages, whaling, shipwreck, and a sojourn with Aborigines.⁹⁶

Common to many autobiographies was a modest disclaimer either to the importance of the contents or the elegance of the style. Historian William Hutton apologised 'to the world... for presenting it with a life of insignificance'. 'I have', he wrote, 'no manoeuvres, no state tricks, no public transactions, nor adventures of moment, to lay before my readers'. Radical Samuel Bamford called his *Early Days* 'a plain and unadorned statement' and similarly Chartist William Lovett was conscious of his inability to make his story interesting 'by style or force of language'. Explorers Mungo Park and Edward Eyre both described their stories as 'unvarnished' as did the son of 'the first white male child born in Australia' when he recalled his family's history in 1894.⁹⁷ There was more than modesty in these claims; there was a claim to truth wherein roughness and lack of polish equated to authenticity. So Henry William Haygarth did not rework his journals for publication fearing that to do so 'should deprive them of the air of freshness and truth', and George Bennett's published 'wanderings' were drawn from 'the notes taken at the instant of observation... without regard to studied composition'. Watkin Tench described his account of the First Fleet at Botany Bay as 'Facts... related simply as they happened', expressly repressing 'the spirit of

⁹⁵ Croker to Lord Strangford, quoted in Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 107.

⁹⁶ *Real Stories: Taken From The Narratives of Various Travellers*, Printed for Harvey and Darton, London, 1827, p. 2; O'Connell, *Residence of Eleven Years*.

⁹⁷ Hutton, *The Life of William Hutton*, pp v-vi; Bamford, *Early Days*, p. 1; William Lovett, *The Life and Struggles of William Lovett, in the Pursuit of Bread, Knowledge, and Freedom; with Some Short Account of the Different Associations He Belonged To, and of the Opinions He Entertained*, Trübner & Co, London, 1876, p. 1; Mungo Park, *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa: Performed in the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797. With an Account of Subsequent Mission to that County in 1805*, John Murray, London, 1816, p. vii; Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1859 (1984), p. 216; James T Ryan, *Reminiscences of Australia. Containing 70 Years of His Own Knowledge, and 35 Years of His Ancestors*, George Robertson and Company, Sydney, 1894, preface, p. 1.

exaggeration'.⁹⁸ The more simple and unexaggerated a story the more truthful it was perceived to be.

Such concerns for authenticity were part of debates over politeness and they displayed a growing ideological assumption that the private inner self, the 'unvarnished' one, is somehow more authentic than the public one to which 'art' is applied, rendering it artificial.⁹⁹ 'Sensibility' may have been seen as a superior discourse to politeness but even declarations of refined feeling were not always clearly genuine.¹⁰⁰ The paradox in diary and autobiographical writing as the pursuit of self knowledge is, of course, that as soon as words are used, some form of artifice is applied. This paradox continues to trouble readers and scholars of these works. As Magdalen Goffin explains, 'if the inner being of those we live with in the flesh day after day remains elusive, how much more is this true of someone we meet mainly through the distorting medium of his own pen'. Musing over her subject Absalom Watkin, whose diaries she edited, Goffin claims that '[t]o the outside world plainly he appeared as a much calmer person than the man revealed in the journal' and her resolution to the paradox is to believe that the 'real Absalom is probably to be found somewhere between the diarist and the public figure'.¹⁰¹

More useful perhaps is Ludwig Wittgenstein's contention that there is no such thing as a 'private' language: that our ways of exploring the world and finding our place in it are guided by 'public' language. Thus men shaped their experiences with the language terms available to them, and in turn, the customary experience and attitudes embodied in language shaped their encounters with other people, places, and events.¹⁰² This concept helps us to understand that the prevalence of self-doubt and self-regulation in diaries was both a reflection of, and an attempt to resolve, the contradictions and ambiguities of medical advice on diet and exercise; of conduct guide's admonishments on social intercourse; of religious injunctions on care of the soul; of debates around

⁹⁸ Haygarth, *Recollections of Bush Life*, p. 4; George Bennett, *Wanderings in New South Wales, Batavia, Pedir Coast, Singapore, and China*, R Bentley, London, 1834, facsimile edition, Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1967, preface; Tim Flannery (ed), *1788 Watkin Tench, Comprising A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay and A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, Text Publishing Company, Melbourne, 1996, p. 15.

⁹⁹ Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, p. 25.

¹⁰⁰ Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, pp. 32, 91.

¹⁰¹ Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, pp. xi-xii, 172.

¹⁰² Ludwig Wittgenstein, 'Notes for Lectures on "Private Experience" and "Sense Data"', in James C Klagge and Alfred Nordmann (eds), *Philosophical Occasions 1912-1951*, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1993, pp. 247, 320; Philip Woodfine, '"Nothing but Dust & the most minute Particles": Historians and the Evidence of Journals and Diaries', in Doll and Munns (eds), *Recording and Reordering*, pp. 189-190.

politeness and authenticity, emotion and reason. It also makes sense of the pervasiveness of the themes and tropes of adventure stories in men's self-writing: such stories were enormously popular reading across the social spectrum, providing not only potential for both literal and metaphorical escapes from the confusion, but also the narrative structure for bringing coherence to lives that did not feel meaningful or orderly.¹⁰³

The last link is about to be snapped?

Adventure may have seemed an escape from uneasiness and morbid sensibility, or an organising narrative in which to make sense of restless lives without the need for deep introspection, but leaving home, for whatever amount of time and for whatever reason, was an intense experience. John Lamb, in *Preserving the Self in the South Seas*, explores 'the strains, nostalgias, and contradictions' that challenged 'any continuous sense of personal identity' when that far away from home: he notes 'a sublime intuition of dislocation and menace, accompanied by feelings of intense yearning, misery, or delight'.¹⁰⁴ Strong feelings raised by religion, physical health and the management of the 'self' did not always have a prominent place in the journals and travel accounts of British men in the Australian colonies, overshadowed perhaps by the sheer novelty of experience, but these men's contemplations on 'home' revealed the depth of their, often mixed, emotions.

On leaving home, when the 'the last link' was about to be 'snapped', emigrant Edward Gittins Bucknall could not write to his brother 'without pain'; ship's surgeon John Price found himself 'in that distracted state of mind' that he 'never expected to have experienced'; surveyor Robert Hoddle felt 'a melancholy sensation' when he beheld the Ramsgate Cliffs, 'perhaps for the last time'; and settler GF Moore felt the 'bitterness' of homesickness, 'the throbbing, the aching, the hopeless despondency of the heart'.¹⁰⁵ The overwhelming distance from home ('sixteen thousand miles from those with whom

¹⁰³ See William Reddy on 'a coherence theory of intention': Reddy, 'The Logic of Action: Indeterminacy, Emotion, and Historical Narrative', p. 33.

¹⁰⁴ Lamb, *Preserving the Self*, p. 281.

¹⁰⁵ Graeme Bucknall and Lorna McDonald (eds), *Letters of an Australian Pioneer Family 1827-1880: The Generation of Gittins and Sarah Bucknall 1797-1880*, The Association of the Bucknall Family, Victoria, 1984, p.59; John Washington Price, A Journal kept on board the Minerva Transport from Ireland to New South Wales, by J. W. Price, Surgeon, BL, ADD MS 13880, p. 30; Robert Hoddle, Diary, SLV, H12032, Box 53/2 (a) & (b), pp. 3-4; Moore, *Diary of Ten Years Eventful Life*, p. 107.

I have ever lived in peace and happiness'¹⁰⁶) could only be bridged with letters, whose long and hazardous journey to and from Britain meant that lengthy and anxious periods of time elapsed without news. 'What a Number of Changes & Events may these three news-less years have brought about!' wrote, sailor Daniel Southwell to his mother, 'It fills me with Hope, and Apprehension: It really causes me, and no doubt many, much uneasiness'. Surveyor George Prideaux Harris felt more than apprehension. He never in his life 'experienced so much disappointment & vexation' than in the week a ship arrived with letters for everyone except him.¹⁰⁷

Yet letters from home were a mixed blessing. Edward Landor's shepherd brother confessed that he cried himself to sleep 'like a great big baby' after receiving letters. 'I am very comfortable and contented so long as I receive no letter from home;' he wrote, 'and yet I am such a fool as to wish for them; and when they come I am made miserable for a week afterwards. Somehow, they make me feel my loneliness more'.¹⁰⁸ And for convict Snowden Dunhill homesickness was a 'unmanly plaintive longing', 'unmanly' perhaps because the intensity of homesickness was beyond a man's self-control.¹⁰⁹ When the distress was beyond words, poetry could help. 'Poor Alexander Selkirk's language is now become mine', wrote the Reverend Walter Lawry to his mother before quoting the six stanzas from William Cowper's poem which talk of friends and loneliness.¹¹⁰

Contemplating return was also a source of mixed emotions. The thought of a 'run home' was seductive, and it was certainly possible that absence could render every remembrance more dear, every scene more beautiful, and oaten cakes sweeter than 'the luxuries of eastern climes'.¹¹¹ But it could also be the case that 'hospitable hearths' would be deserted, the 'cheerful hearts' of friends may have 'ceased to beat', that a man would be only half-remembered or even forgotten. Not conversant with local issues; and no longer acclimatised to the cold, he would be 'a stranger'.¹¹² Even convicts, though forced from home, might find return unsettling rather than reassuring.

¹⁰⁶ Anon, *A Voice From The Bush in Australia*, William Curry, Jun. and Company; Smith, Elder, and Company; John Johnstone, Dublin, London and Edinburgh, 1839, p. 10.

¹⁰⁷ Letter 13 – 14 April 1790, Letters from D Southwell, p. 3; George Prideaux Harris, Miscellaneous letters and papers, Letters and Papers of GP Harris Vol I, BL, ADD MS 45156, Leaf 26.

¹⁰⁸ Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, p. 260.

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 58.

¹¹⁰ 5 December 1818, Lawry Papers 1810-1825.

¹¹¹ Anon, *A Voice From The Bush*, p. 25; Nicol, *Life and Adventures*, p. 127.

¹¹² R Therry, *Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Residence in New South Wales and Victoria, etc*, 2nd edition, Sampson Low, London, 1863, pp. 358-359.

They had no use for quiet – they would get enough of that in the grave, they ‘profanely’ said – so they sought return to the excitements of Drury Lane and Covent Garden where they could display ‘their unexpected wealth and importance to the aspiring gentlemen of the swell mob’. But even if they were remembered they might find that in ‘London they are nobody’ whereas in New South Wales they might be admired, and considered ‘great men among their own class’.¹¹³

Regret, therefore, was perhaps as common as homesickness, but many men were able to reconcile their regret with the opportunities of their new lives. Edwyn Henry Statham’s ‘tear of regret’ when he thought about how long he had been separated from ‘the companions of his youth’ was ‘checked by the noisy and boisterous mirth’ of his children, who reminded him that this was ‘their home’ and that it was his ‘duty to submit cheerfully for their sake to a longer separation from my kindred and country’ (his underlining). Similarly George Suttor ‘lamented, and deeply and bitterly regretted’ that his ‘love of adventure and of nature’ had made him exchange his ‘native land’ for New South Wales. His consolation was ‘a fine climate, well wooded and fine grazing country’ and his ‘wife, and young increasing family’.¹¹⁴

In men’s mixed emotions and their attempts to make sense of them through various forms of self writing, we glimpse the futility of such an exercise, as Jonathan Swift had observed long before: ‘If a man would register all his opinions upon love, politics, religion, learning, etc., beginning from his youth and so go on to old age, what a bundle of inconsistencies and contradictions would appear at last!’¹¹⁵ Hume’s similar conception of men’s personal identity as a ‘bundle’, a ‘bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed after each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement’, included an ‘action’ or ‘operation’ of the imagination, which ascribed an ‘uninterrupted existence’ giving him a sense of himself. ‘[W]e feign the continued existence of the perceptions of our sense’, Hume wrote, ‘to remove the interruption; and run into the notion of a *soul*, and *self*, and *substance*, to disguise the variation’.¹¹⁶ In men’s self writing we find this creation of selves, the care of souls, the

¹¹³ James, *Six Months in Australia*, pp. 52-53.

¹¹⁴ Edwyn Henry Statham to Hugh Worthington Statham, 8 December 1846, Edwyn Henry Statham – letters (5), 1833-1846, written from Sydney and Parramatta to his brothers in England, ML, MSS 7281; George Suttor, Sketch of Events in NSW, ML, C783, CY 970.

¹¹⁵ Jonathan Swift, *The Works of Jonathan Swift, D.D. Dean of St Patrick’s, Dublin; Containing Additional Letters, Tracts, and Poems, Not Hitherto Published; With Notes, and A Life of the Author, by Walter Scott, Esq.*, Archibald Constable and Co, Edinburgh, 1814 (1706), p. 436.

¹¹⁶ Hume, ‘A Treatise of Human Nature’, pp. 310-320.

giving of substance to lives, the attempts to ascribe coherence and continuity through operations of the imagination.

We glimpse in another of Hume's insights part of the reason why adventure and emigration did not resolve the inevitable inconsistencies and contradictions: 'Let us fix our attention out of ourselves as much as possible; let us chase our imagination to the heavens, or to the utmost limits of the universe; we never really advance a step beyond ourselves...'¹¹⁷ As the motto that the University of Sydney adopted in 1856 said, 'Sidere Mens Eadem Mutato': 'Though the heavens are changed, the mind remains the same'.¹¹⁸ But the 'self', the 'mind', are arguably cultural creations and it was their culture that British men took to the Australian colonies, it was the chains of culture that they could not get beyond, whose links refused to snap.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 93.

¹¹⁸ Neville Meaney (ed), *Under New Heavens: Cultural Transmission and the Making of Australia*, Heinemann Educational Australia, Melbourne, 1989, p. 2.

Chapter 3:

My head filled early with rambling thoughts – raising boys and making men

A thing to be managed with great discretion — A plain, English education? — Thousands of impressions are made upon us — Careful and wary conduct in the use of books — I had read Robinson Crusoe many times over, and longed to be at sea

Charles Hardwicke was still endeavouring to establish good habits in his son as Charles Browne Hardwicke embarked on a naval career in 1803. His seven page, closely written letter summarised the advice which he had given so often in the past, from the youth's duty to God, his parents and friends through to the summary that cleanliness, temperance, industry, veracity, honesty and integrity, would ensure the young man's 'consistent protection of the Almighty and the friendship of good Men'. In between, Hardwicke repeated the advice of medical literature, conduct guides, religious tracts, educational instruction, and those commentators who gave particular advice on being a man. He told young Charles to make an effort to write legibly and be accurate in his 'figuring;' to write down his observations and take care of his books; to refrain from drinking; to keep himself clean physically and morally; and to be attentive in his dealings with other men'.¹

Fear that the 'force' of early bad habits could undermine good intentions later in life were expressed by the famous, like Samuel Johnson, and by the faceless, like Captain Robert Johnson who copied Samuel Johnson's biographer's words into his own diary: if these 'early habits have been mean & wretched... Life must be damp'd by the gloomy consciousness of being under an almost inevitable gloom to sink back into a situation which we recollect with disgust. It surely may be prevented by constant attention and unremitting exertion to establish contrary habits of superior efficacy'.² Establishing habits of 'superior efficacy' and instilling the need for 'unremitting exertion' necessarily meant increased attention to the nurturing and education of children who

¹ Charles Hardwicke ALS to his son Charles Browne Hardwicke 16/12/1803 with parental advice as he embarks on a naval career, ML, DOC 2778, CY 4706.

² James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989; Captain Robert Johnson, *Diaries*, ESRO, AMS 5848/1, p. 628.

had begun to be identified as a group with their own needs and interests from the early part of the eighteenth century. They were given increasing freedom in a less harsh and authoritarian context, and literature, toys and pastimes were designed specifically for them. By the end of the century, the romantic concept of an unspoiled and natural innocence furthered the special place of children in the context of actual families.³

How to instill early habits was, however, as contentious as the question of what sort of men should be created, or even, as William Godwin mused, if ‘children’ should be ‘trained to behave like men’ or be ‘encouraged to the exercise of manners peculiar to themselves’?⁴ Such a distinction confirmed the lessons of medical and conduct literature: that ‘being a man’ was a status to be earned through an acknowledged range of behaviours that were not necessarily among the natural inclinations of boys. Yet, from Locke’s injunctions to create sound minds in sound bodies, to Rousseau’s desire to create a ‘natural’ man to live in society, the aims and injunctions of commentators, educators and parents were often contradictory, even unrealistic.⁵ The ‘balance’ that was the aim of boys’ educations and upbringings was as difficult to attain as in men’s physical and emotional health.

This chapter looks at theories surrounding childhood and education, the changing modes of formal education, and the influence of popular culture, particularly the power of the printed word which was substantiated in men’s own writings. A growing print culture was both the medium for, and the cause of, debates over the benefits and dangers of the written word that stemmed from the pedagogical intent of much fiction and non-fiction work, a debate in which *Robinson Crusoe* featured prominently. Print culture and educational debates were among the accoutrements of civilisation that British men carried to the Australian colonies, ensuring that any potential for turning boys into different sorts of men was fleeting. The education of boys, in its broadest sense in both Britain and Australia, established many of the contradictions that led to men’s restless straining against their perceived chains. Like Charles Browne Hardwicke, and Robinson Crusoe, many of their heads were ‘filled early with rambling thoughts’.

³ Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1962, pp. 398-403.

⁴ William Godwin, *The Enquirer. Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature. In A Series Of Essays*, Robert Campbell & Co, Philadelphia, 1797, p. 88.

⁵ John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, London, 1779 (1693), p. 1; Peter Jimack, *Rousseau: Émile*, Grant & Cutler, London, 1983, p. 27, 33-35, 75-76.

A thing to be managed with great discretion

Locke's declaration that there are 'no innate principles in the mind', that 'all ideas come from sensation and reflection' argued for an empirical psychology based on experience which relied upon a certain conception of childhood to make the case.⁶ Locke deviated here from a traditional religious view of human nature that saw children as being under the direction and influence of their sensual desires and appetites. It was, as the Reverend Robert Milne lamented, 'one of the greatest misfortunes of human life' that the reason and religion needed to curb these 'unruly passions' took so long to develop.⁷ Locke advocated a more interventionist model. Underpinning his thoughts on education was the formation of habits, by 'repeated practice', that would create an internal guard of conduct for youths no longer under adult supervision.⁸ Like the conduct literature which is discussed in chapter six, Locke's outline of an educational schema was aimed at male children destined, or whose parents desired them, to be gentlemen. But the balance of 'a sound mind in a sound body' that Locke's injunctions sought would have been difficult for parents and teachers to achieve.

According to Locke, children should not have their cravings pandered to, but their spirits should not be crushed. A variety of playthings was beneficial, but they should not be bought, lest the child be taught 'to wander after change', 'to be unquiet, and perpetually stretching itself after something more still, though it knows not what, and never to be satisfied with what it hath'. Learning should not be made a burden, rules should be few, manners could be learnt by example. A 'plain and rough nature left to itself' was actually better than 'an artificial ungracefulness'. 'Esteem and disgrace' were more effective than 'rewards and punishment' and severe punishments should be avoided except, that is, for 'obstinate disobedience' which 'must be mastered with force and blows'. Crying was not to be indulged in order to harden the child against physical suffering and prevent an 'effeminacy of spirit', but 'foolhardiness and insensibility to danger' were as unreasonable as 'trembling and shrinking at the approach of every little evil'. Locke admitted that it may seem strange to warn against whipping and punishments, yet advocate the fortification of children against pain. The balance for which Locke aimed was precarious, with both parents and children liable to err on one

⁶ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 30th edition, William Tegg & Co, London, 1849, pp. 10-51, p. 53; Larry Wolff, 'Then I Imagine a Child: The Idea of Childhood and the Philosophy of Memory in the Enlightenment', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 31 (4), 1998, p. 382.

⁷ Robert Miln, *National Sins the Cause of National Suffering. A Fast Sermon, Delivered On March 8, 1797*, J Mitchell, Carlisle, 1797, pp. 6-7.

⁸ Locke, *Education*, pp. 12, 66.

side or the other: parents might be too indulgent or severe, children either too timid or reckless. 'I confess', he wrote, 'it is a thing to be managed with great discretion'.⁹

On the more commonly understood aspects of 'education', Locke had almost as much to say, covering reading, writing, drawing, geography, arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, geography and chronology as prerequisites for history, law, rhetoric and logic, letter writing, and natural philosophy. Of languages he advised French, Latin for those not intending to go into trade, and Greek only for those intending to be scholars.

Importantly, he saw a place for manual skills even in a young gentleman's life and his recommendations included painting, gardening or husbandry, and woodwork. These were obviously not skills from which to earn a living. Rather they were forms of recreation, which for Locke meant an 'easing' of the 'wearied part by a change of business' and not the idleness that many took it to be.¹⁰

Locke's continuing influence was pervasive but not always predictable or explicit. In London his name was more than once used to advertise fencing lessons, misrepresentations that ignored Locke's equivocation on the skill: he thought it 'a good exercise for health, but dangerous to the life', and would have preferred a son of his own to be a proficient wrestler.¹¹ In Sydney in 1826 he was quoted in support of the soundness of investing in teachers of quality.¹² Advertisements for private schools invoked Locke by implication only, as for example, in specifying the subjects that would be taught to boys to prepare them for specific trades or professions.¹³ It is possible that by the nineteenth century in Britain, his ideas on education had become so commonplace as to no longer require attribution. This pervasiveness is the conclusion of cultural theorist Richard A Barney who describes Locke's educational treatise as 'a cultural touchstone for discussions that spanned elite and popular genres, philosophical and practical concerns, theological, psychological, and political issues'.¹⁴

William Godwin, at the end of the eighteenth century, also had much to say on the matter of raising boys. He saw children's minds not like water, as Locke did, 'easily turned this or that way', but rather as cartilage, which like their bodies, over time becomes bone'. Whatever the metaphor, the conception was similar: a young boy's

⁹ Locke, *Human Understanding*, pp. 34-191.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 218-310.

¹¹ *The Times*, 3 October 1822, 24 December 1842; Locke, *Human Understanding*, pp. 299-300.

¹² *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 18 March 1826.

¹³ For example, *The Times*, 24 July 1800; 10 March 1840.

¹⁴ Richard A Barney, *Plots of Enlightenment: Education and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1999, pp. 23-24.

mind could be shaped and that shaping required care. As Godwin wrote, 'It is much to be feared, if we breed him in indolent effeminacy to a certain age, that his whole life will bear the marks of it'. Godwin concurred with Locke that raising and educating boys should facilitate them to 'fill a station, act a part', but he introduced a concern for the nurturing of children among the labouring classes, seeing in them a similar potential to children of the upper classes which was thwarted by the immoderate and unrelieved labour they were forced to undertake.¹⁵

Godwin was also explicit about the necessity for balance, 'the delicate preserving of a certain medium', in the raising of children. 'We should reason with children', he wrote,

but not to such a degree as to render them parrots or sophists. We should treat them as possessing a certain importance, but not so as to render them fops and coxcombs. We should repose in them a certain confidence, and to a certain extent demand their assistance and advice, but not so as to convey a falsehood to their minds, or make them conceive they have accomplishments which they have not.¹⁶

When Edwyn Henry Statham, in New South Wales, 'fondly' watched his young son's 'daring exploits and his boisterous passion', he thought it possible, with 'a strong hand' and 'a watchful eye', to set him 'upon the troubled sea of life'. His wish was to see him fulfill his 'station in life with honor and respectability' but Statham hoped to 'instruct his mind without entrenching upon the development of his bodily powers' and he looked forward to this task 'with fear and trembling'.¹⁷ Achieving Godwin's 'certain medium' appeared no less difficult for parents and teachers to achieve than Locke's 'sound mind in a sound body'.

There is 'a discursive trajectory that travels, roughly, from Locke's *Thoughts on Education* to Rousseau's *Émile*'.¹⁸ However, while Rousseau's pedagogical text reinforced many of Locke's lessons, he introduced new ambiguities that increased the perceived difficulties of becoming a 'man'. 'We are born capable of learning, but knowing nothing', he wrote in *Émile*, 'The soul, chained within its imperfect and half-

¹⁵ Godwin, *The Enquirer*, pp. 12-13, 115, 114, 13-14.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁷ Edwyn Henry Statham to Hugh Worthington Statham, 1 April 1841, Edwyn Henry Statham – letters, ML, MSS 7281, echoing Locke – A young man needs sufficient skills and knowledge so 'that when he comes to launch into the deep himself, he may not be like one at sea without a line, compass or sea-chart: but may have some notice before hand of the rocks and shoals, the currents and quicksands, and know a little how to steer, that he sink not before he get experience'. Locke, *Education*, p. 125.

¹⁸ Barney, *Plots of Enlightenment*, p. 110.

formed organs, has not even the feeling of its own existence'. This was in contrast to his more famous line in the *Social Contract*, where he proposed that, politically, 'man is born free, and everywhere he is in irons'.¹⁹ That children are born into the chains of ignorance but men are born free was not the only paradox bequeathed by Rousseau.

Although modern scholars tend to study *Émile* for the light it throws on Rousseau's philosophical work the majority of its contemporary readers undoubtedly saw it as a pedagogical work. In it, Rousseau posed the problem of modern man: that he is corrupt and unhappy in a corrupt and inadequate society. There were two possible solutions. The first took a political approach, seeking the form of society in which man would be most virtuous and happy. The second solution was the reformation of individual man, and this was the aim of *Émile*. Like the son that Locke envisaged in his *Thoughts*, *Émile* was from a wealthy family and he and his tutor had the resources of almost unlimited time and money – even though Rousseau was contemptuous of the rich who lived on unearned income and contributed nothing to the community. Rousseau's ambivalence about society extended to his condemnation of towns, and *Émile*'s ideal life was a rustic one befitting the role of a country gentleman. *Émile* was brought up away from society and every effort was made to safeguard him from its dangers and corruption. Yet entry into society was the inevitable destiny of man and the culmination of *Émile*'s education.²⁰

The contradictions throughout the book – between love of nature and enthusiasm for society, intense individualism and selfless devotion to the state, natural life and civic obligation, freedom and self-restriction, and the advocacy of an aristocratic model in the face of a growing consciousness of the need for some system of national education – are never fully resolved in *Émile*'s education. 'There can be no denying', writes noted Rousseau scholar Peter Jimack, 'that Rousseau's declared aim in *Émile* was to form a natural man to live in society; but it is equally difficult to ignore the ambivalence of this aim'.²¹ Significantly, for Rousseau, a 'natural' man, was quite simply, 'a man'. 'Before his parents chose a calling for him', he wrote, 'nature called [*Émile*] to be a man. Life is

¹⁹ Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Émile*, JM Dent, London, 1974 (1762), p. 28; Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract, or Principles of Political Right*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1968 (1762), p. 49; Wolff, 'Then I Imagine a Child: The Idea of Childhood and the Philosophy of Memory in the Enlightenment', pp. 391.

²⁰ Jimack, *Émile*, pp. 9-10, 16, 23-25, 72.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27, 33-35, 75-76.

the trade I would teach him. When he leaves me, I grant you, he will be neither a magistrate, a soldier, nor a priest; he will be a man'.²²

William Godwin commented that Rousseau's method, based as it was on 'a series of tricks' risked producing children who were insincere, though he still found his writings of 'inestimable value'.²³ Godwin's comments were indicative of the mixed responses to Rousseau's unconventional ideas. In 1830 the most flattering thing a Sydney newspaper could say about Rousseau was that he was not as harmful as Voltaire, and a Mr Rennie lecturing at the Mechanics' Institute in Hobart in 1847 did not want his recommendations to be 'confounded with the system advocated by Jean Jacques Rousseau, with seductive eloquence, in his fascinating, but dangerous, "Emile," of making all education a mere amusement'.²⁴ Although *Émile* was condemned almost as soon as it appeared in 1762, it was extraordinarily influential.²⁵

When Dorothy Wordsworth and her brother were raising four year old Basil Montagu, the son of a friend whose mother had died, she said they were not following any 'system', that their aim was 'to make him *happy*'. Despite her denial of a system, Wordsworth was arguably responding to Rousseau's tone of kindness and concern for the happiness of the child which was a crucial difference between his pedagogical approach and more conventional texts.²⁶ On the other hand Richard Lovell Edgeworth was directly motivated to educate his son according to the system Rousseau proposed. His son Richard was, among other innovations, dressed 'without stockings, with his arms bare.' The experiment lasted for about five years and the record of it and subsequent observations of the Edgeworth children formed the basis of another influential pedagogical text, *Practical Education*, that Edgeworth wrote with his daughter Maria. Published in 1798, the three volumes expounded a scheme for the educational upbringing of children within the family almost from birth to the time when they reached the contemporary standard of a university.²⁷

²² Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 9.

²³ Godwin, *The Enquirer*, pp. 85-86.

²⁴ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 6 March 1830; *The Courier*, 22 August 1846.

²⁵ Jimack, *Émile*, p. 9.

²⁶ V Markham Lester, 'Montagu, Basil (1770–1851)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/19003>>, accessed 13 Oct 2009; Jimack, *Émile*, p. 47.

²⁷ Jonathan Wordsworth, 'Introduction', Maria Edgeworth and RL Edgeworth, *Practical Education Vol 1*, Poole, Woodstock Books, 1996, (no page numbering); Christina Edgeworth Colvin, 'Edgeworth, Richard Lovell (1744–1817)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/8478>>, accessed 13 Oct 2009.

Rousseau's educational ideas found lasting success, not in France, but in Switzerland, Germany, the United States and Britain and its colonies.²⁸ In 1829, Laetitia Wyndham was 'much amused' by descriptions of her 'Australian' grandson as a 'naked boy', not allowed by his father George Wyndham to wear clothes 'for fear of spoiling his shape', as Edgeworth had tried with his son over a generation earlier.²⁹

A plain, English education?

The passionate responses to Rousseau's pedagogy are symptomatic of the broader debates around education raging during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Compulsory education was not introduced in either Britain or Australia until the second half of the nineteenth century.³⁰ During the period under discussion, therefore, formal education was a continually contested and extremely varied affair. Locke may have published his *Thoughts* in the hope of supporting parents who 'dare venture to consult their own reason, in the education of their children, rather than wholly to rely upon old custom',³¹ but there were issues to confront beyond the simple choice between reason and custom. These extended from deep ideological considerations of whether mass education produced citizens or radicals to more pragmatic issues of appropriate curricula in a commercialising and industrialising world. Despite the peculiarities of the early Australian colonies, debates there ranged over very similar issues as in Britain. As historian Muriel Jaeger described it 'the fierce and never-ending battle of the curriculum was in fact now beginning'.³²

Proposals by eighteenth-century reformers to extend education to the children of the labouring classes and the poor were called into question by the radicalism of the French Revolution. Popular education seemed more likely to produce insurrectionists than honest, industrious and sober workers.³³ Intrinsic to this quandary was a debate

²⁸ Jean Bloch, *Rousseauism and Education in Eighteenth-century France*, Voltaire Foundation, Oxford, 1995, p. 235.

²⁹ Laetitia Wyndham to George Wyndham, 28 October 1829, Extracts from Dinton-Dalwood letters, 1827-1853, ML, MSS 1657, CY 3815.

³⁰ AG Austin, *Australian Education 1788-1900: Church, State and Public Education in Colonial Australia*, 2nd edition, Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd, Melbourne, 1965, p. 185.

³¹ Locke, *Education*, p. 319.

³² Muriel Jaeger, *Before Victoria*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1956, p. 113.

³³ Robert Holmes Beck, *A Social History of Education*, Prentice-Hall Inc, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1965, pp. 72, 74; *A Statement of the Objects of the Committee of the Societies for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Established in the Diocese of Australia*, 20 June 1836, 'with a Copy of the Rules and Orders, a Catalogue of Books, and a List of Contributors'

over what should be taught to whom. Grammar schools which initially saw their role as teaching Latin and Greek retained the classic languages even as they moved to a more broadly liberal education that appealed to families of the aspiring middle classes. They were the forerunners of the familiar nineteenth-century 'public' school.³⁴ Radicals like Thomas Paine, however, wanted Latin and Greek, 'the dead languages', left out of the curriculum in favour of more 'scientific' and useful subjects.³⁵ In this they concurred with Rousseau, Locke and Godwin, who all conceded the benefits of manual skills, even for aristocratic students. Locke and Godwin, however, were loathe to relinquish a place for the study of the classics: Godwin believed the 'Latin authors' to be uncommonly excellent and needed to be read in Latin to be fully appreciated.³⁶ Dissenting academies, run by nonconformist clergymen for their congregations included, along with the classics, lessons in the English language and literature, mathematics (geometry, astronomy, trigonometry), natural science and anatomy, history, geography, politics, and philosophy (ethics, logic, and metaphysics). From mid-century they emphasised science, mathematics, and commercial subjects.³⁷

The question of whether children were educationally better served within or outside of home was another aspect of debates over education. Following Locke and Rousseau, private tutoring was the preferred option among the British upper classes during the eighteenth century mainly due to concerns about 'moral contamination' in the mixed classes of public schools.³⁸ Children of the poor who needed to be fit to earn a livelihood were also better served at home than in the workhouse concluded a 'Dr Kay' in the 1837-38 report of the Poor Law Commissioners: boys should live 'beneath the roof of a frugal and industrious father' who could pass on his virtues as well as his

p. 10; Jane Nardin, 'Hannah More and the Rhetoric of Educational Reform', *Women's History Review*, vol. 10 (2), June, 2001, p. 214.

³⁴ R Freeman Butts, *A Cultural History of Western Education: Its Social and Intellectual Foundations*, McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc, New York, 1955, p. 295.

³⁵ Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason*, Josiah P Mendum, Boston, 1852, p. 43; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 256.

³⁶ Locke, *Education*, p. 301; Rousseau, *Émile*, p. 158; Beck, *Social History of Education*, p. 75; Godwin, *The Enquirer*, p. 39, 33.

³⁷ Butts, *Cultural History of Western Education*, pp. 295-296.

³⁸ Henry L Fulton, 'Private Tutoring in Scotland: The Example of Mure of Caldwell', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 27 (3), Fall, 2003, pp. 53-54.

skills.³⁹ Godwin concluded that the objections to both private and public education were 'of great magnitude' and wondered whether some compromise was possible.⁴⁰

Advertisements in *The Times* for private academies and schools reflected the debates and changing priorities in education. From 1788 to 1840 they were invariably aimed at 'young gentlemen', offering 'genteel' boarding, and sometimes 'salubrious air' and 'sea-bathing'. The earlier advertisements emphasised instruction in Latin, Greek and French but around 1800 'merchants accounts' and 'use of the globe' appeared, as did offers to prepare boys not only for the university, army and navy but also for the 'Counting-house and Trade'.⁴¹ A similar pattern is found in *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*.⁴² The balance that educational commentators urged was often promoted. A school in Sydney specifically for infants was advertised as combining 'bodily with mental exercise, and instruction with recreation', and an establishment in Kent, in 1840, offered itself as an answer to all educational issues, including Godwin's compromise of private and public education. Here young gentlemen were 'liberally boarded and prepared for the Public Schools and Universities, professional or mercantile situations' under a 'system' of 'parental kindness' which combined 'the advantages both of public and domestic instruction'.⁴³

Debates and disputes over the modes and bases of education meant that education was an extremely varied experience for boys. Children of the labouring classes gained some education from Sunday Schools (which all taught reading and some taught writing and accounts as well), or from 'dame' schools, a generic description for any working-class private school run by women or working men for whom accident, illness or old age had left no other employment. Parish schools were an alternative for families with some means, and at these reading, writing and arithmetic might be accompanied by Latin, Greek, and English, if the schoolmaster had the required skills. More formal networks of voluntary parish schools were established in 1807 by the Nonconformist British and Foreign School Society and in 1811 by the Anglican National Society, which

³⁹ Fourth annual report of the Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales; together with appendices A. B. & C, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1837-38 (147), p. 147.

⁴⁰ Godwin, *The Enquirer*, p. 52.

⁴¹ *The Times*, 22 February 1788, 29 May 1792, 11 May 1798, 24 July 1800, 9 July 1802, 17 January 1810, 9 March 1816, 24 January 1820, 6 July 1825, 1 January 1830, 3 January 1835, 2 January 1838.

⁴² For example, *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 19 August 1804, 10 November 1805, 10 January 1818, 18 December 1819.

⁴³ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, Thursday 29 January 1829; *The Times*, 10 March 1840.

both began receiving government aid in 1833. Communities such as the Quakers looked after their own children's educational needs.⁴⁴

For families with sufficient means, a grammar school curriculum like that at Rugby included Latin parsing from texts such as Watt's *Scripture History*, Goldsmith's *Roman History*, and the *Iliad*. Dancing, French, drawing, and fencing were undertaken on Saturdays and the school's library included books for 'amusement' like reprints of *Spectator*, *Tatler*, *Rambling Rambler*, *Adventurer* and *Pope's Works*, and Vicesimus Knox's *Elegant Extracts* (prose and poetry selected 'for the improvement of young persons') for the 'upper boys', and for the 'little boys', *Flowers* collections of ancient history, modern history, modern voyages and modern travels, Trusler's *Principles of Politeness* (an abridgement of Lord Chesterfield's Letters), *Telemachus*, and *Robinson Crusoe*.⁴⁵ Grammar schools prepared boys with the ability, and necessary family wealth, for university, usually around the age of sixteen, though they could be younger. John Dunmore Lang, the first Presbyterian minister in Sydney, was twelve when he entered Glasgow University where he studied modern languages, anatomy, chemistry and natural history as well as divinity, Hebrew and church history.⁴⁶

The experience of education was often more fluid than a brief description of options would indicate. Changeable family circumstances affected the education of children. The diverse experiences of Henry Dixon and JB Scott were not unusual. Farmer's son Dixon went to a dame school in his Essex village followed by some time at a private school until the family could no longer bear the expense.⁴⁷ Scott, on the other hand, spent two years in a dame school before going to Bungay Grammar School when his family's fortune changed for the better. Soon he was a private pupil at Beccles, which cost £105 per annum for tuition, board and lodging, 'besides extras', before he went up to Cambridge. He attended further lectures in Edinburgh before taking a European trip

⁴⁴ Donald Read, *Press and People 1790-1850: Opinion in Three English Cities*, Edward Arnold, London, 1961, pp. 36-37; Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, Yale University Press, London, 2001, pp. 148-151.

⁴⁵ Samuel Butler, *The Life and Letters of Dr. Samuel Butler, Head-Master of Shrewsbury School 1798-1836, and Afterwards Bishop of Lichfield, in so far as they Illustrate the Scholastic, Religious, and Social Life of England, 1790-1840*, John Murray, London, 1896, pp. 24-39.

⁴⁶ Archibald Gilchrist (ed), *John Dunmore Lang: Chiefly Autobiographical 1799 to 1878. Cleric, Writer, Traveller, Statesman, Pioneer of Democracy in Australia. An Assembling of Contemporary Documents*, Jedgram Publications, Melbourne, 1951, pp. 12-13; John Dunmore Lang, *Reminiscences of my Life and Times*, Edited with an introduction and notes by DWA Baker, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1972, pp. 35-26.

⁴⁷ HN Dixon, 'Reminiscences of an Essex country practitioner a century ago', *The Essex Review*, vol. 23 (October), 1914, p. 192.

and then returned to Cambridge to take the degree of MA.⁴⁸ A mix of domestic and formal education was also common. William Cobbett attended a dame school, but it was his father, a publican and farmer, who taught him to read and write, and gave him a 'tolerable knowledge of arithmetic'. Edward Eyre, son of a curate, left school at age sixteen 'tolerably proficient in Latin, Greek, Mathematics... and then read for a short time with a tutor at home'. Alexander Dalrymple's father was a baronet, member of parliament and auditor to the exchequer of Scotland. His earliest education came from his father before attending school until he was fourteen and going abroad before he was sixteen. However, as the seventh son of sixteen children, Dalrymple did not attend university (his more fortunate eldest brother ensured that he had some Latin) and he travelled without a tutor.⁴⁹

While JB Scott spent his time at Cambridge 'very agreeably' in bathing, riding, reading, dancing and visiting, what many other men recounted of their schooling would have disappointed educational commentators and parents. William Hutton's dame school teacher often held the boy by the hair and beat his head against the wall, but, recalled Hutton, he 'never could beat any learning into it'. Nor did Richard Beck consider his seven years at a Friend's school in Rochester as 'productive of much educational advancement': for one thing, a lack of organised outdoor games 'left the lads so restless, that runaway scenes were of frequent occurrence'. His years as an apprentice chemist were also remembered as 'a drudgery at pestle and mortar, together with leisure hours ill spent in rude sport amongst town lads in the streets'.⁵⁰

In the early Australian colonies, educational experience was similarly determined by class and circumstance. The First Fleet included seventeen children of convicts and nineteen of marines, but Arthur Phillip's instructions did not mention them and regimental schoolmasters were not appointed until 1809. Thus Phillip and his

⁴⁸ Ethel Mann (ed), *An Englishman at Home and Abroad 1792-1828 With Some Recollections of Napoleon: Being Extracts of the Diaries of J. B. Scott of Bungay, Suffolk*, Heath Cranton Limited, London, 1930, pp. 23, 29-30, 45, 47, 51, 167-169. 186.

⁴⁹ William Cobbett, *The Autobiography of William Cobbett. The Progress of a Plough-Boy to a Seat in Parliament*, Faber and Faber, London, 1967 (1933), pp. 11-12; Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1859 (1984), p. 1; George Mackaness, *Alexander Dalrymple's "A Serious Admonition to the Public on the Intended Thief Colony at Botany Bay" With A Memoir*, Reprint edition, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1943 (1979), p. 4; Andrew S Cook, 'Dalrymple, Alexander (1737-1808)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/7044>>, accessed 3/2/2010.

⁵⁰ Mann (ed), *An Englishman at Home and Abroad*, p. 51; William Hutton, *The Life of William Hutton*, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, London, 1816, p. 9; CR Elrington, 'Hutton, William (1723-1815)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14317>>, accessed 20/8/2009; William Beck, *Family Fragments, Respecting the Ancestry, Acquaintance and Marriage of Richard Low Beck and Rachel Lucas*, Privately Printed by John Bellows, Gloucester, 1897, pp. 16-17, 20.

immediate successors relied on individuals and happenstance: literate soldier Corporate William Webster of the New South Wales Corps was diverted from his military duties and ordered to keep a school; literate convict Thomas McQueen was released from his penal duties and set to the same task; occasionally a missionary temporarily in Port Jackson would be offered a place as a schoolmaster. A ration, a grant of land, the services of an assigned convict or a small payment from funds made available by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel were the only sources of remuneration for these teachers.⁵¹ By the first decade of the nineteenth century, fee-paying students were an option for private teachers in New South Wales like 'Mr Crook' in Parramatta, John and James Kenny in the Rocks of Sydney, Thomas Taber the vestry clerk of St Philip's, a certain 'T Florance' and '[T]hree persons lately arrived from England', who all offered various combinations of reading, writing, arithmetic, English, Latin, Greek, French, Italian, fencing, dancing, music and drawing, as well as 'book-keeping according to the Italian mode' and 'use of the Globe'.⁵²

During the 1820s and 30s formal institutions appeared: the Sydney Academy (where scholars were 'formed to the Habits of Gentlemen'), Sydney Public School, Sydney Public Free Grammar School, Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, King's School (an Anglican establishment), the non-denominational Sydney College, a Presbyterian primary school and the, also Presbyterian, Australian College.⁵³ By 1839 this last had 116 pupils undertaking natural philosophy, mathematics, history and geography and a quarter of them attended Latin and Greek classes.⁵⁴ In the early 1840s, missionary James Backhouse gave an anecdotal survey of the varied educational approaches that he observed during his travels, including some government and orphan schools, a 'respectable boarding-school', and the Point Puer establishment for convict boys which combined coercive labour with education. He commented on the inefficiencies of King's School and the inadequacy of education for the 'lower classes' who were 'growing up in much ignorance', but he was pleased with the Male Orphan School at Liverpool where 160 boys received a 'plain, English education' and the 'rudiments of tailoring, shoe-making, gardening, and husbandry'.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Austin, *Australian Education 1788-1900*, pp. 1-5; John F Cleverley, *The First Generation: School and Society in Early Australia*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1971, p. 73.

⁵² *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 19 August 1804, 6 October 1805, 10 November 1805, 16 August 1807, 10 January 1818, 18 December 1819.

⁵³ DWA Baker, 'Lang, John Dunmore (1799-1878)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020069b.htm>>, *ADB*, accessed 30/3/2009.

⁵⁴ Lang, *Reminiscences*, pp. 90-91.

⁵⁵ James Backhouse, *A Narrative of A Visit to the Australian Colonies*, Johnson Reprint Edition 1967, Hamilton, Adams and Co, London, 1843, pp. 23-26, 226-227, 403, 418.

Such trades formed much of the education of lower class boys in both Britain and the Australian colonies whose formal schooling ended once they could be apprenticed, which could be as early as the age of seven.⁵⁶ Apprenticeships were also available in the professions and were a means for aspirational families to further their sons' chances in life. Alexander Mackenzie was placed in the office of 'highly respectable' accountants at the age of thirteen. He was 'very desirous to see the world' (as he underlined in his memoirs) and used this experience to gain a position as clerk to a wealthy West Indies merchant. Thus, at the age of fifteen, as he walked to the port at Wapping with the prospect of the voyage and wider world before him, he felt that he had 'the confidence and consequence of a man'.⁵⁷

Mackenzie was following the path of many young men. Travel, whether with the army or navy, to take up positions in the colonies, or for interest's sake, was commonly thought to complete the education of boys: to refine their manners, hone their judgement, perfect their languages and turn them into men.⁵⁸ The 'Grand Tour', the name given to extended travel in continental Europe taken before youths turned twenty one, was the preferred means for young gentlemen to achieve this. Despite the Grand Tour being a major educational and cultural experience shared by the young men who constituted Britain's ruling class, historian Michèle Cohen is one of few scholars to consider the Tour's significance in the creation of English gentlemen. Cohen brings to light the inherent paradoxes in this aim. Firstly, the age at which boys were sent abroad was often criticised as being too young for success,⁵⁹ but this age was chosen specifically to remove boys from the womanly sphere of home. The anxiety over effeminacy exhibited here is the second paradox of the tour: that the overly-polished manners, ostentatious dress, and affected borrowings from the French that young men actually learned, opened them to accusations of effeminacy once they returned

⁵⁶ For example: William Hutton went to work in a silk mill when aged seven, Hutton, *The Life*, p. 13; John Younger commenced work as a shoemaker at the age of nine, John Younger, *Autobiography of John Younger, Shoemaker*, St. Boswells, J & JH Rutherford, Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1881, p. 7; Richard Beck was fourteen when he became an apprentice to a chemist and druggist, Beck, *Family Fragments*, p. 20; James Bisset was fifteen when he was apprenticed in a lacquerwork manufactory, James Bisset, *Memoir of James Bisset (Written by himself), of Perth, Birmingham, and Leamington: Author, Royal Medallist, Poet, And Inventor; With, Portrait, Numerous Illustrations, And A Collection of His Songs, &c.*, Frank Glover, Leamington Spa, 1904, p. 71; TF Henderson, 'Bisset, James (1762?–1832)', rev. Michael Marker, ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2479>>, accessed 20/8/2009.

⁵⁷ Alexander Kenneth Mackenzie, *Memoirs of Alexander Kenneth Mackenzie, Esq., Dochcairne, Bathurst, N.S.Wales*, Written by himself at the age of 68, from memory, ML, DOC 2528, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁸ Advocated by Locke, *Education*, p. 312.

⁵⁹ For example: Locke in 1693, Joseph Addison in 1712, Vicesimus Knox in 1782.

home.⁶⁰ Caught between the comfort of motherly love and the foppery of French manners, it was difficult for aristocratic boys to become British men. The value of travel abroad was no longer espoused in educational literature by the beginning of the nineteenth century and the practice, disrupted by the ongoing wars with France and denigrated in the face of rising British nationalism, faded out.⁶¹

In the Australian colonies, however, boys from families with the necessary resources of money or relatives at home were sent to Britain for schooling. This was partly a practical necessity before formal institutions were established and for university level education it remained so until the opening of the University of Sydney in 1850. Schooling in Britain could also be a matter of family circumstance. John Campbell, the eldest son of wealthy merchant Robert Campbell, was schooled in England because the family was temporarily, and unwillingly, residing there while Robert appeared as a witness for William Bligh at lieutenant-colonel George Johnston's trial. The younger son Charles was schooled in Sydney on the family's return, at institutions and by tutors. Yet he too travelled to Europe when he was nineteen before returning about five years later to become manager of his father's pastoral property.⁶² An education in 'the mother country' did set young men apart, but in the period under discussion it did not attract the criticism of effeminacy that was likely for British men coming of age on the Continent. It did, however, contribute to the blurring of class boundaries when emancipated convicts could afford to send their sons back to England to be schooled.⁶³

In all the educational debates, the strongest passions were aroused over religion. During the first decades of the nineteenth century no system of national elementary education could be devised that satisfied both Churchmen and dissenters. It was

⁶⁰ For example, comment to the editor, *London Courant and Westminster Chronicle*, 14 July 1780, and *Aurora and Universal Advertiser*, 22 February 1781.

⁶¹ Michèle Cohen, 'The Grand Tour. Language, National Identity and Masculinity', *Changing English*, vol. 8 (2), 2001, pp. 129-141.

⁶² CET Newman, 'Campbell, Charles (1810-1888)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010185b.htm>>; H McCallum, 'Campbell, John (1802-1886)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010186b.htm>>; Other examples of boys and young men educated in Britain include: JL Stewart, 'Bayly, Nicholas Paget (1814-1879)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A030115b.htm>>; CA McCallum, 'Hobson, Edmund Charles (1814-1848)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010503b.htm>>; JD Heydon, 'Macarthur, James (1798-1867)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020132b.htm>>; Ruth Teale, 'Macarthur, Sir William (1800-1882)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A050145b.htm>>; Neil Smith, 'Youl, Sir James Arndell (1811-1904)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A060481b.htm>>; Ann M Mitchell, 'Youl, Richard (1821-1897)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A060482b.htm>>; GP Walsh, 'Deniehy, Daniel Henry (1828-1865)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A040047b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 8/2/2010.

⁶³ GP Walsh, 'Nichols, George Robert (1809-1857)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A050383b.htm>>; Arthur McMartin, 'Nichols, Isaac (1770-1819)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020250b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 3/2/2010.

almost impossible for the government to navigate the bitter disputes over funding and control.⁶⁴ In the early Australian colonies, where the establishment of schools was a means to contest both state and religious power, disputes were no less bitter.⁶⁵ Thus, from fervent ideologies to disputed practices and fractured experiences, the 'balance' in boys' education which was the aim of educational theorists and parents, was often undermined.

Thousands of impressions are made upon us

For boys of all classes, however, formal schooling was not their only influence. As William Godwin explained: 'Thousands of impressions are made upon us, for one that is designedly produced. This child receives twenty ideas *per diem* perhaps from the preceptor; it is not impossible that he may have a million of perceptions in that period, with which the preceptor has had no concern'. 'What we feel, and see, and hear, and read, reiterated Richard Lovell Edgeworth, 'affects our conduct from the moment we begin till the moment when we cease to think'.⁶⁶ The majority of Britons still lived in a predominantly oral culture. In urban centres, theatre and music hall continued this culture and increasingly dense urban populations actually enabled new oral forms: the outdoor and indoor political meeting grew in size; the sermon could be delivered to larger audiences (with performances of gifted preachers treated as fashionable social events); and, the lecture series was a popular and influential disseminator of social thought, from those offered in Mechanics' Institutes to those delivered by the likes of Samuel Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle.⁶⁷

One of the educative values of theatre was the window it provided to exotic places for audiences across the social spectrum.⁶⁸ In 1785, the South Seas came to the stage in the pantomime *Omai or a Trip Around the World*, inspired by the first Polynesian to visit London when he accompanied the crew of Captain Cook's second Pacific voyage in

⁶⁴ Read, *Press and People 1790-1850*, pp. 35-37.

⁶⁵ Austin, *Australian Education 1788-1900*, pp. 8-9, 40-41.

⁶⁶ Godwin, *The Enquirer*, pp. 14-15; Maria Edgeworth, *Tales of Fashionable Life, in Five Volumes, Vol. I.*, Baldwyn & Craddock, London, 1837, p. xiii.

⁶⁷ Raymond Williams, 'The Press and Popular Culture: An Historical Perspective', in George Boyce, James Curran and Pauline Wingate (ed), *Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day*, Constable, London, 1978, pp. 45-46; Margarette Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power, 1750-1815*, Ashgate, Aldershot, England, 2002, p. 109.

⁶⁸ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, Harper Collins, London, 1997, pp. 351, 357-383.

1774. The pantomime was described in *Rambler's Magazine* as a 'school for the history of Man'.⁶⁹ And in 1787 an opera called *Botany Bay* was performed in Covent Garden: it was described as 'partly moral and partly comic'.⁷⁰ But theatre also ensured the continuation of British culture in those exotic places. It travelled to the Australian colonies with the First Fleet. We know that at least one play was performed on the voyage, on 2 January 1788, as the fleet entered the Southern Ocean, and the first play in the colony was performed in celebration of the King's birthday on 4 June 1789. It was George Farquhar's very popular *The Recruiting Officer*, a 'display of gayety and gallantry; of thoughtless adventure, of "hair-breadth 'scapes," and of the slippery turns of fortune'. A proper playhouse was built less than three years later.⁷¹ Pierce Egan's *Tom and Jerry, Life in London*, had an Australian premiere in 1834 and, in 1843, an Australian version, titled *Life in Sydney: Or, The Ran Dan Club*, was refused permission to be staged because the characters it portrayed were too recognisable in the small society of the colony.⁷² James Demarr remembered the theatre in Sydney in 1839 as 'a very creditable one', he 'relished the performance much'.⁷³

By the 1830s the reach of the printed word across Britain and its colonies was undeniable.⁷⁴ The *Westminster Review* calculated that, on an average, every London newspaper was read by thirty people. This was made possible, in part, by subscription reading rooms like that in Manchester which was open from six in the morning until ten at night and provided ninety-six newspapers every week, from Dublin, Belfast, Liverpool, Glasgow and Leeds.⁷⁵ Circulating libraries gave similar access to fictional writing. At the beginning of the eighteenth century leading fiction sales occasionally reached 10,000 copies; by the middle of the century 100,000 copies was not unusual. Since the seventeenth century almanacs, chapbooks, ballads and broadsheets had always sold at levels well above that of books, and by the 1820s, very large sales were attained: Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*, sold 50,000 copies in a few weeks in 1791;

⁶⁹ Quoted in Greg Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, p. 270.

⁷⁰ *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 14 April 1787.

⁷¹ George Farquhar, *The Recruiting Officer, A Comedy*, Oxberry's Edition, Wells and Lilly, Bostong, 1822, p. 4; Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, pp. 222-223; Shirley Strum Kenny, 'Farquhar, George (1676/7–1707)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/9178>>, accessed 2 Oct 2009.

⁷² Richard Fotheringham and Angela Turner, *Australian Plays for the Colonial Stage, 1834-1899*, Queensland University Press, St Lucia, 2006, pp. 41-50; it was not performed until 1978, pp. 55-57.

⁷³ James Demarr, *Adventures in Australia Fifty Years Ago*, Swan Sonnenschein and Co, London, 1893, p. 41.

⁷⁴ Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, pp. 125-167.

⁷⁵ A Aspinall, *Politics and The Press c. 1780-1850*, Home & Van Thal Ltd, London, 1949, pp. 24-26.

Cobbett's *Address to the Journeymen and Labourers*, sold 200,000 copies in 1826; and, the 'Last Dying Speech and Confession' of the murderer of Maria Marten sold more than 1,100,000 copies.⁷⁶ The clergy maintained their role in informing public opinion through published catechisms, hymnals and homilies and sermons, the latter being the single most important of all literary forms.⁷⁷

Less serious publications like *The Wonderful Magazine: And Marvellous Chronicle* were more like theatre in print form. This particular weekly publication billed itself as 'a work recording authentic accounts of the most extraordinary productions, events, and occurrences, in providence, nature, and art. Consisting entirely of such curious matters as come under the denominations of miraculous! queer! odd! strange! supernatural! whimsical! absurd! out of the way! and unaccountable!' It introduced readers to murderous French midwives, fat men and bearded women, Bedouins, wild Arabians and American crocodiles, and people who changed sex. It considered the strange constitutions of human bodies, including spontaneous combustion, and 'instances of extraordinary joy'. It took people to the Continent, to America, and the 'Polar Regions'. It serialised Swift's *Gulliver Travels* and gave excerpts of Defoe's *Moll Flanders*.⁷⁸ Essex doctor Henry Dixon recalled the effect of these mass produced publications in his childhood at the end of the eighteenth century: they 'produced a change upon the public mind which can hardly now be appreciated or understood', he wrote, 'we seemed to live in a new world'.⁷⁹

Few of these 'thousands of impressions' were accepted by commentators as benign. Their ability to entertain was not in doubt. 'No child ever read an account of a shipwreck, or even a storm, without pleasure', admitted Maria and Richard Edgeworth in their first volume of *Practical Education*, and, perhaps, such 'species of reading' was suitable for boys 'intended for a seafaring life, or for the army'. But the Edgeworths were adamant that the 'taste for adventure is absolutely incompatible with the sober perseverance necessary for success in any other liberal profession'. Yet they acknowledged the 'contradiction' in their remarks, fully understanding that 'courage and fortitude are the virtues of men' and it was 'natural' for boys to seek the opportunities that adventure provided to display these virtues 'to advantage'.⁸⁰ The printed word was,

⁷⁶ Williams, 'The Press and Popular Culture', p. 43.

⁷⁷ Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, p. 172; Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, p. 109.

⁷⁸ Henry Lemoine, *The Wonderful Magazine*, C Johnson, London, 1793.

⁷⁹ Dixon, 'Reminiscences', p. 192.

⁸⁰ Maria Edgeworth and RL Edgeworth, *Practical Education 1801. Vol 2*, Woodstock Books, Poole and New York, 1996, pp. 110-111.

therefore, no less an object of contention in the raising of boys than educational theories and practices.

Careful and wary conduct in the use of books

The cargo of the First Fleet contained over four thousand books. They accompanied the Reverend Richard Johnson, and though they were multiple copies of only fifty-one different titles, it was a significant library. It contained the expected psalms, catechisms, sermons and exhortations against various sins as well as education literature like the *Child's First Book* and a hundred spelling books.⁸¹ The expanding print culture that reached the other side of the world had the effect of not only disseminating, but potentially distorting the written word. As an example, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* ran to five complete editions during the eighteenth century, but one hundred and fifty one chapbook versions during the same period. These abridgements shared an emphasis on Crusoe's shipwreck and the early part of his island experience, invariably illustrated with an armed Crusoe in goatskin, with a wrecked ship in the background. One mid-century chapbook was just eight pages long, with Friday appearing only in the final paragraph.⁸² We cannot ignore the possibility that such chapbook adaptations could supersede the original in general consciousness and we may be missing what is being received if we only look at the full text version of such works.⁸³ Further muddying the notion of 'reception' of texts, contemporary commentators and readers debated the benefits of reading, and expressed concern over the fine line between fact and fiction in both fictional and non-fictional works. While it is problematic to talk of 'reception' we do have some men's responses to what they were reading.

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall have observed that reading was a form of instruction, self-discovery and self-definition as well as a source of 'profound pleasure, both individually and collectively'.⁸⁴ However, its benefits were not unambiguous.

⁸¹ Neil K Mackintosh, *Richard Johnson: Chaplain to the Colony of New South Wales. His Life and Times 1755-1827*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1978, Appendix 2; Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, p. 176.

⁸² Rose, *Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, pp. 94-95, 107-108.

⁸³ Pat Rogers, *Literature and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century England*, Harvester Press, Brighton, 1985, pp. 177-178; Felicity A Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989, p. 18.

⁸⁴ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, Routledge, London, 2002, p. 162.

Books could provide consolation in grief, lead a soul to God, and be shared with friends.⁸⁵ They were 'the grand line of demarcation between the human and the animal kingdoms', and a 'great, enduring and uncloying pleasure'.⁸⁶ But books might also stimulate minds, adding to a man's wants and rendering 'the satisfying of them more costly and difficult'.⁸⁷ The poet Josiah Conder almost vowed never to touch another novel. 'They intoxicate me', he wrote, 'I find my mind needs dieting, as well as constant exercise, to preserve it from morbid feelings'.⁸⁸ Books could promote dangerous ideas, from 'romantic notions of men and manners' that were of no benefit to a poor boy, to radical politics where warehouse porter Samuel Bamford's reading habit led him.⁸⁹

In the Australian colonies, books were not just companions and consolation but also charms against the anxiety of dislocation. Their lack was felt very keenly. Books could turn a tent into a home. They were 'a very scarce article' and 'therefore every little trifle – newspaper – handbook or anything that comes from England is valuable'. Books were 'read, re-read, and re-re-read'.⁹⁰ Books in the colonies could also be immensely practical. John Boston, a free settler who arrived in New South Wales in 1794 found that he could make beer from Indian corn, an experiment in which he had been aided by an encyclopaedia. This book probably belonged to Thomas Fyshe Palmer, a Scotsman transported for seditious practices, who arrived on the same ship with Boston and entered into a business partnership with him soon after. Palmer used the encyclopaedia to build a small sailing vessel for trade with Norfolk Island.⁹¹

There was no denying the power of words. For Edmund Burke they influenced the passions and when combined gave new life and force to simple ideas. Rousseau

⁸⁵ Dorothy Hooper to William Farr's mother, 13 Feb 1743, Farr Papers Vol 1, BL, MS ADD 37060, L103; Walter Lawry to his mother, October 1817, Lawry Papers, ML, CY765; Hooper to Farr's mother, 13 Feb 1743, Farr Papers, L103.

⁸⁶ Godwin, *The Enquirer*, p. 25; Magdalen Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993, p. 3.

⁸⁷ *The Hobart Town Courier*, 24 May 1833; Charles Rowcroft, *Tales of The Colonies; Or, The Adventures of an Emigrant*, 3rd edition, Smith, Elder and Co, London, 1845 (1843), p. x.

⁸⁸ Eustace R Conder, *Josiah Conder. A Memoir*, John Snow, London, 1857, p. 90.

⁸⁹ James Hardy Vaux, *Memoirs of James Hardy Vaux, A Swindler and Thief*, Whittaker, Treacher, and Arnot, London, 1830, p. 4; Samuel Bamford, *The Autobiography of Samuel Bamford. Volume One: Early Days Together with an Account of the Arrest, &c.*, New, Frank Cass, London, 1967 (1849), pp. 89-91, 192-194; Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, p. 39.

⁹⁰ Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative*, p. 112; 1 March 1837, Farquhar Mackenzie, Journal, ML, A1291, CY1808; George Prideaux Harris, Miscellaneous letters and papers, Letters and Papers of GP Harris Vol I, BL, ADD MS 45156, Leaf 28-31; Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, p. 258.

⁹¹ Judith Iltis, 'Boston, John (-1804)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010118b.htm>>; John Earnshaw, 'Palmer, Thomas Fyshe (1747-1802)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020278b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 27/2/2009.

credits learning to read as the date from which he had an 'uninterrupted knowledge' of himself'. 'Words are things'; wrote George Gordon Byron, 'and a small drop of ink / Falling like dew upon a thought, produces / That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think'. 'I cannot tell you what I should have been', confessed William Godwin, 'if Shakespear [sic] and Milton had not written. The poorest peasant in the remotest corner of England, is probably a different man from what he would have been but for these authors'. Practical, intoxicating, life-changing: no wonder, then, that Locke urged 'careful and wary conduct in the use of books'.⁹²

The novels that Locke was particularly concerned about became respectable and suitable for boys in the hands of the enormously popular Walter Scott. In Scott's weaving of popular memory and believable history with stories that were concerned over loss of independence and the disintegration of traditional ways of life, he characteristically expressed these concerns through the dilemmas of vulnerable young men at historical turning points. While some commentators saw such works as a threat to genuine history because they substituted a more stimulating but less accurate representation of reality, Scott's approach helped to allay long-standing anxieties about the suitability of the genre for male readers.⁹³ By 1821 the *Quarterly Review* could find the sort of 'solid sense' in novels that allowed men to read them without shame.⁹⁴ But that melding of history and stories meant novels continued to be a source of concern for educators and commentators. Scott's use of history paralleled historians' use of fiction. As history writing became less concerned with the intricacies of high politics and more interested in the rise of civil society (legal regimes, political and religious identities, and social customs) its authors borrowed strategies from novels.⁹⁵ Nor were

⁹² Edmund Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, London, 1792, pp. 285-286; Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions of Jean Jacques Rousseau. Book 1*, Privately printed for the members of the Aldus Society, London, 1903 (1782), p. 17; Robert Darnton, 'Readers Respond to Rousseau: The Fabrication of Romantic Sensitivity', in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, Basic Books, New York, 1984, p. 227; George Gordon Byron, *Don Juan*, Phillips, Sampson and Company, Boston, 1858 (1819), p. 139; Godwin, *The Enquirer*, p. 112-113; John Locke, *The Conduct of the Understanding*, Scott, Webster and Geary, London, 1838 (1706), p. 55; Gillian Brown, 'The Metamorphic Book: Children's Print Culture in the Eighteenth Century', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* vol. 39 (3), 2006, pp. 351-362.

⁹³ Everett Zimmerman, *The Boundaries of Fiction: History and the Eighteenth-Century British Novel*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1996, p. 20; Brian Hamnett, 'Fictitious Histories: The Dilemma of Fact and Imagination in the Nineteenth-Century Historical Novel', *European History Quarterly*, vol. 36 (1), 2006, pp. 32-39.

⁹⁴ *Quarterly Review*, January 1821, pp. 352.

⁹⁵ Examples include William Robertson's moving portrayal of Mary Queen of Scots in his *History of Scotland*, David Hume's and William Goldsmith's tragic portrayals of the execution of Charles 1 in their histories of England and Tobias Smollet's affecting account of the fate of the Scottish Jacobites after Culloden in his *Complete History of England*, discussed in Karen O'Brien, 'History and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 68 (1/2), 2005, pp. 398, 401, 405-406, 413.

novelists and historians necessarily different authors: Daniel Defoe, Tobias Smollett, Henry Fielding, and Oliver Goldsmith, all cut their teeth as translators and writers of history.⁹⁶ The difference between fact and fiction was, thus, potentially perplexing.

Confusion was comprehensible when novels made claims to factuality. The preface of a 1790 edition of *Robinson Crusoe* states boldly that 'The Editor believes the thing to be a just history of facts; neither is there any appearance of fiction in it'. And the author of *The Hermit* declared his book 'of more Use to the Public' than 'Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*', or the 'Travels of Lemuel Gulliver' because 'every Incident, herein related, is real Matter of Fact'. The author of *Quintus Servinton. A Tale Founded Upon Incidents of Real Occurrence*, perhaps the first novel published in Australia, also claimed that though his work looked like a novel, 'it [was] no fiction, or the work of imagination'.⁹⁷ Adventure stories were read in conjunction with narratives of real-life exploration. Defoe's *Crusoe* followed the facts of Alexander Selkirk's four years solitude on the island of Juan Fernandez, an experience that had been published a few years earlier than Defoe's novel. William Dampier was a crewmate of Selkirk's and his tales of circumnavigating the globe and accounts of his voyage to New Holland were widely read. James Cook's journals became bestsellers. And in 1814 Matthew Flinders published his adventures of the first circumnavigation of Australia.⁹⁸ Nor should we underestimate just how common maritime misadventures were. Among Royal Navy ships alone there were around sixty shipwrecks in the 1790s, just over a hundred in the 1800s, another sixty odd in the 1810s, seventeen in the 1820s and five in the 1830s.⁹⁹ Henry Rotton was just one merchant seaman who survived shipwreck in the West Indies before reaching Australia in 1836.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 400.

⁹⁷ Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, London, 1790 (1719), p. 1; Peter Longueville, *The Hermit: Or, The Unparallel'd Sufferings and Surprising Adventures of Mr. Philip Quarll, An Englishman*, 3rd edition, Printed for J Wren, S Crowder, H Woodgate, J Fuller, and J Warcus, London, 1759, p. iv; Henry Savery, *Quintus Servinton. A Tale Founded Upon Incidents of Real Occurrence*, Jacaranda Press, Brisbane, Melbourne, 1962 (1830-31), p. xxxiii.

⁹⁸ Martin Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, 1990, p. 11; Paul Arthur, *Virtual Voyages: Travel Writing and the Antipodes 1605-1837*, Anthem Press, London and New York, 2010, pp. xxi, 17; Joel H Baer, 'Dampier, William (1651-1715)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/7087>>, accessed 30/3/2008; Paul Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders: personal letters from an extraordinary life*, Hordern House in association with the Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002, pp. 4, 26.

⁹⁹ Institute of Navy History website <<http://www.royal-navy.org/lib/index.php?title=Shipwrecks>>, accessed 26/3/2009.

¹⁰⁰ EJ Lea-Scarlett, 'Rotton, Henry (1814-1881)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A060072b.htm>> ADB, accessed 13/3/09.

There was more to this confusion, however, than fiction's direct claims to being fact and the factual accounts that sounded so similar. As readers our understanding of a text is shaped by everything else that we read. If stories are incompatible, such as *Genesis* and *The Origin of the Species*, we need to make a decision about which is more 'realistic', but if we are only exposed to a limited range of texts that tend to agree, there is no basis for seeing any of them as fiction. This is part of the concept of 'intertextuality'.¹⁰¹ The best-sellers of eighteenth-century Britain were chapbook romances, the Bible, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. They all told essentially the same stories of thrilling adventures, amazing journeys, terrific struggles and memorable heroes who, with the help of God, miraculously prevail. Their similarities are a result of the heavy use of Biblical themes and imagery by Bunyan, Defoe and the chapbook's authors.¹⁰² As soldier's son Joseph Barker said, 'I doubted nothing that I found in books... I had no idea at the time I read *Robinson Crusoe*, that there were such things as novels, works of fiction, in existence', and he was not alone.¹⁰³ Controversy still raged over the authenticity of the epic poem supposedly authored by an ancient Gaelic bard called Ossian: not everyone was persuaded by *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* that the Ossian had been 'quietly left... to share the admiration of schoolboys, with Robinson Crusoe'.¹⁰⁴ And stockmen in Gippsland as late as 1841 delighted in nightly readings of Charles Dicken's *Nicholas Nickleby*, '[t]o them it was a real life history'.¹⁰⁵ Emigrant Henry Whittingham, on board the *Duke of Wellington* on his way to Australia in 1853, described succinctly this blurring of fact and fiction and the influence of texts on the reader's experience of other texts. On reading Alexander Harris's *Martin Beck: or, The Story of an Australian Settler*, 1849, Whittingham said: 'I have learned more real information from this real novel, than from all other works put together, though probably my former readings have helped me profitably to read this picture of an Australian *Life*'.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Julie Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1980, pp. 64-91: meaning is not transferred directly from writer to reader but instead is mediated through, or filtered by, 'codes' imparted to the writer and reader by other texts, a view of intertextuality taken up by Jonathan Rose.

¹⁰² Rose, *Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, pp. 94-95.

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp. 95-96; Defoe's novels, 'in spite of much improbability... have been oftener mistaken for true narratives, than any fictions that ever were composed: *The Quarterly Review*, *The Quarterly Review*. Vol XXIV. October & January, John Murray, London, 1820-1821, p. 361.

¹⁰⁴ Blackwood's, 'Sir John Sinclair', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. XLIL (CCLXI), July, 1837, p. 16 (apparently Sinclair had a part in the controversy).

¹⁰⁵ Demarr, *Adventures in Australia*, pp. 119-120.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Andrew Hassam, *Sailing to Australia. Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1994, pp. 83-84.

Novels like *Quintus Servinton* and *Robinson Crusoe* were offered to readers as ‘useful and instructive precepts under their most attractive guise – the force of example’.¹⁰⁷ This pedagogical intent of much fiction reminds us that children’s literature and adult literature were not yet settled into the distinct genres that we now understand. There were books specifically for children, and their publishers heeded Locke’s counsel that books for children should have pictures, but illustrations were not exclusive to children’s books before the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁸ When children’s literature did emerge as a separate genre, adventure remained ubiquitous as did the ambiguity of fact and fiction. The prolific Mary Ann Hedge used adventure as a reward for twelve year old Charles (‘introduced to our young readers as a pleasing model for imitation’) in *The Orphan Sailor-Boy; Or, Young Arctic Voyager*. Charles wanted to be a sailor and have adventures among ice-bergs as his grandfather had done. Charles’ passionate studies of navigation, mathematics and accounts of voyages and discoveries assuaged his father’s objections and at the end of the book Charles may yet realise his dream by joining Captain Parry in his very real proposed third voyage to find a passage through the Arctic Sea.¹⁰⁹

The anonymous *Real Stories: Taken From The Narratives of Various Travellers*, 1827, did little to clarify the real from the fiction. Its first chapter begins with young Bevan asking ‘Was there really such a man as Robinson Crusoe, mamma?’ To which ‘mamma’ replied, ‘The history of Robinson Crusoe, my dear, is neither entirely fact nor entirely fiction’.¹¹⁰ It is not surprising, perhaps, that one specialist in eighteenth-century literature and philosophy has suggested that Hume’s influential skepticism ‘follows directly upon his examination of the affective nature of literature’ and the ultimate ‘unknowability of the distinction between fiction and reality’.¹¹¹

Reading’s propensity to promote adventure and war was accepted but not unanimously agreed to be beneficial for boys. Godwin thought Homer wrote the *Iliad* ‘as an example of the fatal consequences of discord among political allies’ yet also noted that its most conspicuous effect was of ‘enhancing the false lustre of military achievements, and

¹⁰⁷ Savery, *Quintus Servinton*, p. xxxiii; Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. i.

¹⁰⁸ Gillian Brown, ‘The Metamorphic Book: Children’s Print Culture in the Eighteenth Century’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 39 (3), 2006, pp.351-352.

¹⁰⁹ Mary Ann Hedge, *The Orphan Sailor-Boy; Or, Young Arctic Voyager*, Harvey and Darton, London, 1824, pp. 15, 27, 105-108.

¹¹⁰ *Real Stories: Taken From The Narratives of Various Travellers*, Printed for Harvey and Darton, London, 1827, p. 1.

¹¹¹ Rebecca Tierney-Hynes, ‘Hume, Romance, and the Unruly Imagination’, *SEL*, vol. 47 (3), Summer, 2007, p. 650.

perpetuating the noxious race of heroes in the world'.¹¹² Shoemaker-poet, Thomas Cooper, a Chartist who worshipped Homer, Shakespeare, Swift, and Dickens, agreed. He found the *Iliad* transcendent and moral, 'and yet it enthrones the bad passion for war'.¹¹³ For Unitarian writers like Anna Laetitia Barbauld and John Aikin these bad passions for war were behind the destructive global interventions of British government policies and they explicitly wrote against the transmission of these values to boys. In stories like 'The Ship', the young protagonist Charles is dissuaded from following a school fellow who has given up his studies to join the navy. Barbauld and Aikin offered alternative male 'heroes' like the prison reformer John Howard who died from fever while nursing the sick, and a young man who protected his mother and siblings from the alcoholic father but nursed his father through his bouts of drunkenness.¹¹⁴

Anglican Sarah Trimmer, however, thought this anti-war attitude both unpatriotic and contrary to the Old Testament.¹¹⁵ As we have seen, the Edgeworths equivocated. Richard and Maria admitted that the boy of seven who 'longs to be Robinson Crusoe, or Sinbad the sailor, may at seventeen retain the same taste for adventure and enterprise' and unfortunately 'admire the soldier of fortune, the commercial adventurer, or the nabob'.¹¹⁶ But Richard later modified his argument to say that boys destined for the military should read books that 'excite enthusiasm, not... the nice calculations of prudence...', they 'should read accounts of shipwrecks, and hair-breadth escapes, voyages, and travels, histories of adventures, beginning with Robinson Crusoe, the most interesting of all stories, and one which has sent many a youth to sea'.¹¹⁷

I had read Robinson Crusoe many times over, and longed to be at sea

After the weather, and their health, journal-writing men would record their reading, not only what they read for themselves but what they read aloud to their families.¹¹⁸ We also find evidence of the extent of men's reading habits in inventories, orders and

¹¹² Godwin, *The Enquirer*, pp. 106-107.

¹¹³ Rose, *Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, pp. 38-39.

¹¹⁴ Michelle Levy, 'The Radical Education of *Evenings at Home*', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 19 (1-2), 2006-7, pp. 124-143.

¹¹⁵ Aileen Fyfe, 'Reading Children's Books in Late Eighteenth-Century Dissenting Families', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 43 (2), June, 2000, pp. 455-456, 463.

¹¹⁶ Maria Edgeworth and RL Edgeworth, *Practical Education 1801. Vol 2*, Woodstock Books, Poole and New York, 1996, p. 114.

¹¹⁷ RL Edgeworth, *Essays on Professional Education*, Printed for J. Johnson, London, 1809, p. 124.

¹¹⁸ Johnson, *Diaries*, 12 January 1821 to 7 August 1821; Conder, *A Memoir*, pp. 47-48.

advertisements, which reveal men's engagement not only with traditional culture and newer knowledge in the fields of natural sciences and agriculture, but also with current affairs, novels of sensibilities, concerns with health and manners, and a curiosity about other men's lives.¹¹⁹ Men were not passive consumers of this printed material. They treated books as objects of real value. They fretted about whether and what they should be reading. They commented on and discussed what they read.¹²⁰ And they used analogies from their reading to describe their own lives. Awaiting transportation, Joseph Gerrald reassured friends that they would yet laugh at his adventures which would be 'as amusing an entertainment as the history of Robinson Crusoe or any other roving vagabond'. Moreover, men acted on what they read. JJ Macintyre moved to London after reading Smollett's *Roderick Random*. Alexander Dalrymple wanted to see the East Indies after reading Nieuhoff's *Voyages*. And one twenty year old left Glasgow for Sydney in 1832, 'induced to do so from having read a book upon Australia, which [he] had got from a subscription library'.¹²¹

Whether the son of a farmer or a gentleman, an apprentice in a silk mill or a convict child, an Anglican or dissenter, destined for university or the army or trade, living in Britain or Australia, boys' mixed encounters with formal education and the multifarious influences of popular culture provided less than clear instructions for successful manhood. Adventure stories offered as 'fact' and 'instruction' seemed to provide a more coherent guide to manhood than could be gained in the midst of debates about the competing benefits of Latin and manual trades. And these stories – in the form of novels, chapbooks, theatre and accounts of real life escapades – were available to men across the social spectrum.

There was no conscious effort to make young men restless. Locke was explicit about this. 'My meaning therefore is not', he wrote, 'that children should purposely be made

¹¹⁹ For example: William Hall Archives, WSRO, ADD MSS 39854-858; Harris, Miscellaneous letters and papers, Leaf 34, undated; *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser*, 26 August 1825.

¹²⁰ Hutton, *The Life*, pp. 60-61; Cobbett, *Autobiography*, pp. 18-19; Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative*, p. 4; Dixon, 'Reminiscences', p. 192; 30 November 1823, Robert Hoddle, Diary, SLVA, H12032, Box 53/2 (a) & (b); Thomas Alexander Browne, Our family chronicle/My Autobiography by "Rolf Boldrewood", ML, A2132, CY705, p. 52.

¹²¹ Letter from Joseph Gerrald to William Phillips, 1795, Samuel Parr, Letters (5) re Parr's defence of and friendship with the Scottish Martyr, Joseph Gerrald, and the advocacy of a subscription fund collected before Gerrald's transportation, ML, DOC 1896, JJ Macintyre Papers Vol I, BL, MS ADD 41742, L164; Mackaness, *Alexander Dalrymple's*, pp. 4-5; R Therry, *Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Residence in New South Wales and Victoria, etc*, 2nd edition, Sampson Low, London, 1863, p. 259; Russel Ward and John Robertson (eds), *Such Was Life: Select Documents in Australian Social History 1788-1850*, Ure Smith, Sydney, 1969, p. 185.

uneasy'.¹²² It was, however, the inevitable result for many. And while some worked off their restlessness simply wandering 'in the wilds of literature',¹²³ other men took more assertive action. 'Native-born' Australian William Charles Wentworth left Sydney in 1813 with William Lawson, Gregory Blaxland, four servants, four horses, and five dogs, to undertake the first crossing of the Blue Mountains, that 'formidable chain of mountains' by which the European-known Australia was bound 'from north to south'.¹²⁴ By 1822, British sailor John Nicol's life had been twenty-five years of continual change. 'Twice I circumnavigated the globe;' he wrote, 'three times I was in China; twice in Egypt; and more than once sailed along the whole landboard of America from Nootka Sound to Cape Horn; twice I doubled it'. And Nicol had no regrets: 'Old as I am, my heart is still unchanged; and were I young and stout as I have been, again would I sail upon discovery'. He had, you see, read *Robinson Crusoe* 'many times over, and longed to be at sea'.¹²⁵ That the colonies offered particular benefits to male Britons was not lost on parents. Attracted by Edward Gibbon Wakefield's ideas, Mary Thomas and her family were on the first ship to arrive in South Australia, though she would never have made the decision to leave England, 'but for the sake of the Boys'.¹²⁶

¹²² Locke, *Education*, p. 147.

¹²³ Godwin, *The Enquirer*, pp. 115-116.

¹²⁴ WC Wentworth, *Statistical, Historical, and Political Description of The Colony of New South Wales, and Its Independent Settlements in Van Diemen's Land with A Particular Enumeration of the Advantages which these Colonies Offer for Emigration, and their Superiority in Many Respects Over Those Possessed by the United States of America*, Facsimile edition, Griffin Press Limited, Adelaide, 1978, G and W B Whittacker, London, 1819, p. 245.

¹²⁵ John Nicol, *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol Mariner*, Cassell & Company, London, 1937 (1822), pp. 31, 36; also Vaux, *Memoirs*: 'Like Robinson Crusoe, I felt a strong predilection for rambling into foreign countries, and had a longing desire to go to sea', p. 5; and others.

¹²⁶ Mary Thomas letter 14 October 1838, MSS82, Royal Commonwealth Society Library London, quoted in Emma Curtin, 'Gentility Afloat: Gentlewomen's Diaries and the Voyage to Australia, 1830-80', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 26 (105), 1995, p. 636.

Chapter 4:

Satisfied with nothing but going to sea – seafaring lives and island hopes

**Arrive at the state of manhood with honour and credit to yourself — I am in hell
— Every fellow appears the Master — Ploughing the land, ploughing the deep**

Despite writer George Borrow's 1851 claim that 'England owes many of her astonishing discoveries both by sea and land, and no inconsiderable part of her naval glory', to *Robinson Crusoe*, there is, of course, no way to demonstrate how many adventurous careers the book inspired – but the assertion was made in dozens of autobiographies and biographies.¹ Defoe's novel, however, was the rewrite of far older sea-faring adventures and it incorporated island imagery that had just as old an ancestry. It appealed particularly to British men familiar with the sea voyage as a well-worn trope for the journey of life: men who were often portrayed as having salt water running through their veins.² As William Cobbett declared when he first gazed out to sea at Portsmouth, 'no sooner did I behold it than I wished to be a sailor. I could never account for this sudden impulse, nor can I now. Almost all English boys feel the same inclination: it would seem that, like ducks, instinct leads them to rush on the bosom of the water'. So familiar was the sea that poet Thomas Kibble Hervey wrote, in his most famous poem 'Australia', 1819, that for Britain's 'hardy children', 'The wave [was] their world – the ship their island-home!'³

Perhaps it was the practical individualism of the Crusoe character, much admired and perpetuated by Rousseau, that contributed to Western thought's emphasis on 'neatly bounded' island-like conceptualisations of individual selves, families, communities and nations that has led us to say we are 'at sea' when boundaries are blurred and things

¹ George Borrow, *Lavengro*, JM Dent and Sons Ltd, London, 1944 (1851), pp. 23-24; Martin Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, 1990, p. 29.

² Margarette Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power, 1750-1815*, Ashgate, Aldershot, England, 2002, pp. 126.

³ William Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men, and (Incidentally) to Young Women, in the Middle and Higher Ranks of Life. In a Series of Letters to a Youth, a Bachelor, a Lover, a Husband, a Father, a Citizen or a Subject*, Henry Frowde, London, 1906 (1829), p. 9; Thomas K Hervey, *A Poetical Sketch-Book, including A Third Edition of Australia*, Edward Bull, London, 1829, p. 187; For the sea as 'an immediate presence in English life', see Laura Brown, 'Oceans and Floods: Fables of Global Perspective', in Felicity A Nussbaum (ed), *The Global Eighteenth Century*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

are unclear. But during the eighteenth century it was with maritime narratives that the British organised – mentally, economically and politically – their new seaborne empire.⁴ In this expanding empire, being ‘at sea’ was for many men, in the words of a popular song, ‘where I should ever be’.⁵ It was the continents that were filled with blank spaces: the oceans were crowded with islands and with ships plying the well-known sea routes between them’.⁶ Importantly, being at sea, was the perfect environment for male bodies that were ‘calculated for activity and exertion’.⁷

For male bodies in need of further rehabilitation, islands were ideal for the sort of ‘tinkering’ that historian David Lowenthal says led to such nineteenth century experiments in criminal rehabilitation as Norfolk Island in the 1840s. Here, along the lines of the ‘pedagogy of Crusoe and Rousseau, men corrupted in the industrial cesspits of Europe would be redeemed by immersion in primeval purity. Tilling the soil on these remote and isolated islands would render criminals virtuous’.⁸ This seemed proved in the person of Jack Adams, last living member of the *Bounty*’s mutineers and founding father of the pious and well-ordered community on Pitcairn Island. Echoing Crusoe’s castaway experience, such reports reinforced the regenerative potential of islands in British imaginations.

Britain’s commercial enterprise and military activity were undertakings that justified and supported each other and were predicated on the efficiency and might of the merchant and Royal navies.⁹ The sea’s potential for adventure and fortune was confirmed during the eighteenth century as it facilitated trade and the expansion of empire. But by the end of the eighteenth century, as this chapter argues, seafaring lives were troubled solutions for men seeking the financial security, independence of action and physical

⁴ John R Gillis, ‘Island Sojourns’, *Geographical Review*, vol. 97 (2), April, 2007, p. 281.

⁵ The Sea! the Sea! the open Sea!

The blue, the fresh, the ever free;

Without a mark, without a bound,

It runneth the earth’s wide regions round.

It plays with the clouds, – it mocks the skies,

Or like a cradled creature lies.

I’m on the Sea! – I’m on the Sea!

I am where I should ever be;

Five Popular Songs: viz. By the Side of the Stream. Beautiful Kate. Draw the Sword, Scotland. Last Rose of Summer, and The Sea. c1840s (undated)

⁶ John R Gillis, ‘Islands in the Making of an Atlantic Oceania, 1500-1800’, in Jerry H Bentley, Renate Bridenthal and Kären Wigen (eds), *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges*, University of Hawai’i Press, Honolulu, 2007, p. 29.

⁷ John Sinclair, *The Code of Health and Longevity*, G and W Nicol, London, 1818, p. 250.

⁸ David Lowenthal, ‘Islands, Lovers, and Others’, *Geographical Review*, vol. 97 (2), April, 2007, p. 215;

Godfrey Baldacchino, ‘Islands as Novelty Sites’, *Geographical Review*, vol. 97 (2), April, 2007, p. 166.

⁹ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, Yale University Press, London, 1992, pp. 8-9.

endurance required for successful manhood. Although the navy offered opportunities for social mobility, these opportunities increased the anxiety of social position, and they all but disappeared in the peace following 1815. The prospects for fortunes in sealing and whaling were undermined by the harsh physical nature of the work. And it was the regenerative nature of islands, of land-based life, as the lives of the *Bounty* mutineers and the First Fleet convicts seemed to prove, that appeared to offer men more secure futures than lives at sea. Despite the gloss of maritime glory, for British men 'to excel and arrive at the state of manhood with honour and credit' was no easy task'.¹⁰

Arrive at the state of manhood with honour and credit to yourself

From the bible to JMW Turner's paintings, western culture is awash with ocean and island imagery. In biblical geography, the principal geography known to Europeans until the eighteenth century, islands were the product of the flood that shattered the previously whole earth, separating mankind until the time of the second coming. Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden of Eden had created a homelessness that would not end until that moment. In the meantime, Christians could seek some measure of redemption in acts of pilgrimage to islands and sacred places with island-like qualities.¹¹ Thus islands are imagined as Eden-like paradises, spaces of refuge, and isolated retreats, and the Homeric epics can be thought of as a verbal 'sailing manual' for the material world of islands and seas in which Odysseus and his men voyaged.¹² Shakespeare's *The Tempest* is island literature which melds reality with illusion and a forerunner to the many fictional characters who travel to islands, alone or accompanied, and return disturbed, broken, refreshed, redeemed, resolute or shaken but always transformed by the experience.¹³

As Greg Denning points out, our perennial interest in Robinson Crusoe in 'all his guises' shows how island stories touch a 'mythic nerve'.¹⁴ Islands seem to shake their visitors

¹⁰ Christopher Claxton, *The Naval Monitor; Containing Many Useful Hints For Both the Public and Private Conduct of the Young Gentlemen In, or Entering, That Profession, In All Its Branches.*, Second, AJ Valpy, London, 1833, p. 126.

¹¹ Gillis, 'Island Sojourns', pp. 277-278.

¹² Kenneth R Olwig, 'Review: *Islands of the Mind: How the Human Imagination Created the Atlantic World*, by John R Gillis', *Geographical Review*, vol. 97 (2), April, 2007, p. 302; Kenneth R Olwig, 'Are Islanders Insular? A Personal View', *Geographical Review*, vol. 97 (2), April, 2007, p. 179.

¹³ Baldacchino, 'Islands as Novelty Sites', pp. 169-170.

¹⁴ Greg Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, p. 308.

out of the complacency of contemporary social mores.¹⁵ They are prompts to action and to adventure, not just for fictional characters like Robinson Crusoe and Thomas More's Raphael Hythloday or ancient heroes like Odysseus and saints like Brendan, but also for more ordinary men.¹⁶ In their boundedness, islands appear comprehensible, so that Rousseau might be confident that he could depict the totality of nature on Ile St Pierre, leaving no 'blade of grass not amply described'.¹⁷ In their isolation, islands are favoured locations for visions of both the future and the past. More's island utopia in the early sixteenth century was one in a succession of island homes for imagined alternative societies. By the end of the eighteenth century island utopias were just as likely to be associated with the past, with early man.¹⁸ Islands, then, can be seen to 'act as advance indicators or extreme reproductions of what is present or future elsewhere' providing the sort of profound insight that Charles Darwin found in finches on the Galapagos Islands and Alfred Russel Wallace saw in birds of paradise on Aru Island that led to the articulation of evolutionary biology.¹⁹ They were the sorts of insights that could only emanate, perhaps, when 'unimpeded by the trappings of excessive civilization and refinement'.²⁰

Between these islands were the seas and oceans navigated and traversed by the seamen who were more important than any other sector of the British labour force.²¹ For these men the Crusoe story was not simply myth. In 1815 it was on the syllabus of a naval college, 'revised and corrected' by the hydrographer of the *Naval Chronicle* for 'the advancement of nautical education'.²² Naval service employed a large percentage of the male population (over one in five of the population of Britain that were capable of bearing arms were engaged in some form of military service by 1803) and naval operations employed even more than those serving at sea: naval dockyards were Britain's biggest industrial complexes in the eighteenth century and the largest single

¹⁵ Baldacchino, 'Islands as Novelty Sites', p. 170.

¹⁶ Gillis, 'Island Sojourns', p. 276.

¹⁷ Lowenthal, 'Islands, Lovers, and Others', p. 206.

¹⁸ Gillis, 'Island Sojourns', pp. 279-280.

¹⁹ Baldacchino, 'Islands as Novelty Sites', pp. 165-174; Iain McCalman, *Darwin's Armada: How Four Voyagers to Australasia Won the Battle for Evolution and Changed the World*, Penguin Group (Australia), Camberwell, Victoria, 2009.

²⁰ Eliga H Gould, 'Lines of Plunder or Crucible of Modernity? The Legal Geography of the English-Speaking Atlantic, 1660-1825', in Jerry H Bentley, Renate Bridenthal and Kären Wigen (ed), *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu, 2007, p. 112.

²¹ Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, p. 5.

²² Quoted in Pat Rogers, *Robinson Crusoe*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1979, p. 11. Rogers writes that 'among all the uses to which *Crusoe* had been put by its adaptors this must be the one of which Defoe would have wholeheartedly approved'.

employer of civilian labour. Ship building demanded from the British government more than a third of its total expenditure. The 168,000 pounds of hemp, 33,750 pounds of copper, 4,800 pounds of nails, and 100,000 cubic feet of timber that went into each of the 74-gun ships which were the mainstay of the navy, were part of a trade that in the Baltic alone engaged 4,500 merchant seamen. The financing of naval expansion came largely from excise duties on imports and indirect taxes on a huge variety of goods and luxuries, from windows to hair powder, playing cards, non-working horses, carriages and servants.²³ Thus the bulk of the tax burden fell most heavily on the commercial and middling classes as consumers, yet they expressed no discontent as they benefited directly from the navy's control and expansion of the shipping trade. As the navy expanded, Britain's commerce by sea increased by seven per cent year after year from £44.5 million in 1792 to £73.7 million in 1800. This was just one of the ways in which the British navy and British commerce were mutually sustaining.²⁴

The merchant navies, therefore, loomed as large in British politics, trade and public and private life as the Royal navy. Politicians did not distinguish between the need for a strong navy to secure global trade and an overseas empire, and the need for a strong navy to secure Britain's strategic position in Europe. Merchants and manufacturers took as keen an interest in the activities of the Royal navy as the merchant navies and often proudly associated themselves with its successes.²⁵ And connections to the British Merchant Navy and the British East India Company (which had been trading for some 200 years by the end of the eighteenth century) were as much a feature of many families as connections to the Royal navy, with a grandfather who drowned at sea on a voyage to the West Indies, or a father who 'made some stupid ventures in the West Indies, and lost a lot of money'.²⁶ Men like Jacob Nagle and William Raven spent their whole careers moving between the Royal and merchant navies, a common, though not always voluntary experience. Merchant seamen were the targets of impressments to fill the crews of warships until the Quota System was introduced in 1795. Edward Spain

²³ Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 2-5; see also Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, p. 629.

²⁴ Adam Nicolson, *Men of Honour: Trafalgar and the Making of the English Hero*, Harper Perennial, London, 2006, pp. 41-42.

²⁵ Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 42, 104-105.

²⁶ Arthur Easton, 'Nagle, Jacob (1761-1841)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/AS10367b.htm>> accessed 13/3/09; Vivienne Parsons, 'Raven, William (1756-1814)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020318b.htm>> accessed 13/3/09; Archibald Gilchrist (ed), *John Dunmore Lang: Chiefly Autobiographical 1799 to 1878. Cleric, Writer, Traveller, Statesman, Pioneer of Democracy in Australia. An Assembling of Contemporary Documents*, Jedgram Publications, Melbourne, 1951, p. 5; John Webster, *Reminiscences of an Old Settler in Australian and New Zealand*, Southern Bookbinding, New Zealand, 1908, pp. 14-15.

was one young man whose inclination to 'rove' saw him follow his father into the merchant navy, but he was twice 'press'd' into the Royal navy. At the end of the American revolution he considered once again joining the merchant service but he was swayed by his wife and his landlord who pointed out the benefits of the Royal navy's superannuation and widow's annuity.²⁷

As Spain's experience illustrates, when it came to furthering their own, and their families', interests, men made little distinction between the Royal and merchant navies and in the early Australian colonies naval experience of either variety could be put to profitable use. George Ward Cole made lieutenant but once retired on half pay began a career as a merchant marine, trading in opium, furs and sandalwood. Ranulph Dacre followed an almost identical path and by 1840 he was one of the leading merchants of Sydney, owner of a wharf in the harbour and director of several businesses including the Union Bank of Australia. Charles Bishop, a midshipman in the navy before commanding various merchant ships across the world's oceans, sailed his own trading ship to Sydney in 1801. One of Sydney's richest merchants in the first decade of the nineteenth century, with a small sailing fleet of his own, Graham Blaxcell had joined the navy as recently as 1801. And Anthony Curtis had run away from home to become a ship's boy: by the 1830s his profits from hotel and store keeping were invested in substantial whaling ventures, a fishing station from which cured fish was exported, and a 36-ton trading schooner.²⁸

Opportunities for adventure and fortune overshadowed the human casualties of a sea life, which included far more deaths by shipwreck, disease and accident than deaths in active warfare. During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, this was in the order of 1,875 men lost in action, 13,600 through shipwreck and 72,000 from disease or accident. With the poor communications of the time, thousands of men entered the navy never to be heard of again.²⁹ But the hardships and dangers did little to dampen the enthusiasm of young British men for a life at sea; the opportunity it provided to prove physical mettle was part of the attraction.

²⁷ Edward Spain, *Reminiscences, 1774-1802*, ML C266, CY 1403.

²⁸ Weston Bate, 'Cole, George Ward (1793-1879)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010222b.htm>>; D. Shineberg, 'Dacre, Ranulph (1797-1884)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010262b.htm>>; Michael Roe, 'Bishop, Charles (1765?-1810?)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010101b.htm>>; E. W. Dunlop, 'Blaxcell, Garnham (1778-1817)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010108b.htm>>; Cara Cammilleri, 'Curtis, Anthony (1796-1853)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010259b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 13/3/09.

²⁹ Nicolson, *Men of Honour*, p. 146; Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 4-5.

Crusoe's father was not in favour of his son's desire for a life at sea, but many eighteenth century fathers, even prosperous ones who might have been expected to have other plans, thought otherwise. This was more than allowing young men to expend energy before settling down. Fathers understood that manhood had to be achieved and that time in the navy or the army or other physically risky and honourable venture would ensure this in a way that work in the newer commercial enterprises and professions was unlikely to. The more hazardous and difficult, the more credit was reflected on the man undertaking it.³⁰ Young William Chapman expressed his yearning for the sea in sketches of ships and seascapes. His father Henry, a prosperous merchant, and friend of Arthur Phillip would have accepted Phillip's offer to take William with him to New South Wales, but William's mother Christina Neate opposed the idea. Henry remonstrated gently by letter from America: 'The opportunity of initiating our young fellow was a most good one. You say he is too young and too little; the change in climate would in all probability have made him grow and consider my love he is 13 years old'. William got his chance when he accompanied Philip Gidley King to Port Jackson and Norfolk Island in 1791. Christina was obviously still not convinced but Henry was heartened by the prospects of an honourable career for William and he kindly chastised her. 'Altho I do not wonder at your feelings of distress on account of the departure of our sweet little William', Henry wrote to Christina, 'yet pardon me if I say you do wrong in giving way to them'.³¹

In seeing an opportunity for an honourable career for William, Henry Chapman was responding to a changing, though not uncontested concept,³² of honour earned through deeds rather than heredity. This change in the understanding of 'honour' created the possibility, if not always the actuality, of a shared meaning of honour across the social spectrum.³³ Thus naval commanders need not be gentlemen or men of education, they could be brave men who learned their trade at sea. This was the opinion outlined by Lieutenant Edward Thompson in letters to his cousin which he subsequently published for the benefit of other men wanting to join the navy. Thompson warned, however, that officers needed gentlemanly accomplishments: in '[t]he last war, a chaw of tobacco, a rattan, and a rope of oaths, were sufficient *qualifications* to constitute a lieutenant' he

³⁰ Claxton, *The Naval Monitor*, p. 147.

³¹ Sir Frederick Chapman, *Governor Phillip in Retirement*, Reprint edition, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1962 (1979), p. 18; 'Chapman, William Neate (1773?-1837?)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010204b.htm>> accessed 6/3/09.

³² For example: Debate at Coachmakers Hall, 24 October 1782, advertised in *Gazetteer*, 22 October 1782, in *London debating societies 1776-1799*, record 334.

³³ Elizabeth A Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage*, Longman, London, 1999, p. 38

stated, 'but now education and good manners are the study of all: and far from effeminacy'. He recommended studies in French, Spanish, Italian, and mathematics to help with navigation, as well as drawing, fortification and surveying of coasts and harbours. Fencing and dancing he considered as useful 'light accomplishments'.³⁴

All of these skills were to be attained by fifteen years of age because a new recruit needed six years served at sea (unless he went to Portsmouth Academy which counted as sea time) before he could be examined for lieutenant's rank at the age of twenty or twenty-one. A man like Andrew Barclay who 'was never at a school' and learnt all that he knew 'after going to sea' at the age of sixteen might get no further than the rank of gunner. To really shine, wrote Thompson, a man must be 'a man of letters, and languages, a mathematician, and an accomplished gentleman'. Not just 'any blockhead' could become an officer. Thompson's observations of what was required for a successful lieutenant and advice for how to achieve that success paralleled conduct literature's guidelines on how to be a gentleman. His recommendations were echoed by Christopher Claxton in *The Naval Monitor*, which gave very detailed advice to any man who wished 'to excel and arrive at the state of manhood with honour and credit to [him]self'.³⁵

The traditionally greater social standing of army officers over naval officers began to alter during the second half of the eighteenth century. Public questioning about the suitability of aristocrats for naval leadership created a space for men of modest means and more humble origins to not only pursue material and social advancement, but also express their individual manliness while working for the public good rather than for private gain.³⁶ Naval victories, like Admiral Vernon's over the Spanish at Porto Bello in 1739, inspired the sort of public patriotism centred around Britain's eminence at sea which was enshrined in Rule Britannia, first performed in 1740. Around the same time, the introduction of uniforms for sea officers, and the opening of the Greenwich Hospital as a home for returned seamen made naval men more visible in the community. In the glow of patriotism, even ordinary sailors were seen in a more favourable light. The cartoonists' everyman 'John Bull' was joined by the gallant and trim 'Jack Tar', a more suitably patriotic figure for a country facing external danger, and he was celebrated in

³⁴ Quoted in Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 22-23.

³⁵ Thomas Scott, 'Life of Captain Andrew Barclay of Cambock, near Launceston, Van Diemen's Land / written from his own dictation at Cambock, February 19, 1836 to Thomas Scott, Assistant Surveyor-General, V.D.L.' Mitchell Library, B 193, p. 5; Thompson quoted in Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 22-23; Claxton, *The Naval Monitor*, p. 126.

³⁶ Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, p. 3.

popular song, theatre and prints.³⁷ Under this same glow of patriotism, however, the behaviour of naval officers was heavily scrutinised. The executions of Lieutenant Phillips in 1745 for surrendering his ship to the French and of Admiral Byng in 1757 for failing to fight sufficiently vigorously, brought to the fore concerns about the fighting fitness of effeminate, Frenchified aristocrats and raised the possibility that more of Britain's male population was similarly unsuited for military action,³⁸ prompting 'a Loud Call to awake from Luxury and Selfishness, Extravagance and Indolence'.³⁹

By the end of the century, the navy had become one of few professions in which a man without an independent income could not only maintain himself as a gentleman but also aspire to a coat of arms: Nelson, the son of a country parson was a case in point. During wartime especially, the navy was a prime means of social mobility. Individuals moved up the ranks more quickly as officers fell in battle and those men who captured enemy prizes earned the capital to purchase land.⁴⁰ Jane Austen's Sir Walter Elliot, in *Persuasion*, found such aspirations offensive: the Royal navy, he observed, offered 'the means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction, and raising men to honours which their fathers and grandfathers never dreamt of'.⁴¹ Men of 'obscure birth' were often those in the 'middle station', 'not exposed to so many vicissitudes as the higher or lower part of mankind' as Crusoe's father had described. But there was little room in this station in which to prove courage and earn honour. Crusoe himself was not prepared to settle for it, nor was Daniel Southwell who joined the navy as a first lieutenant's servant, was a midshipman on the First Fleet and made lieutenant in 1794; nor the eldest son of the Dissenting minister at Bumpstead in Essex who ran away to sea over conflict with his father and returned six years later as 'a well-dressed and well-mannered gentleman;' nor Matthew Flinders who had 'too much ambition to rest in the unnoticed middle order of mankind'. '[T]hou knowest well enough that I am ambitious of fame', he wrote to his wife Ann, but more than fame was at stake in his ambitions. Flinders' claim to successful manhood and its ensuing happiness was encumbered in his ambition, as his wishes for his brother Samuel reveal: 'I hope he'll

³⁷ Jeannine Surel, 'John Bull', in Raphael Samuel (ed), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity. Volume III National Fictions*, Routledge, London, 1989, p. 11; Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 2-3.

³⁸ Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 2-3; Karen Harvey, 'The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 44 (2), April, 2005, p. 308.

³⁹ *Harrop's Manchester Mercury*, 17 August 1756 quoted in Matthew McCormack, 'The New Militia: War, Politics and Gender in 1750s Britain', *Gender & History*, vol. 19 (3), November, 2007, p. 484.

⁴⁰ Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 4, 36.

⁴¹ Jane Austen, *Persuasion*, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008 (1818), p. 22.

make a good Sailor, a good officer and a good Man, which last is the Groundwork of the other two and the Foundation of all Happiness'.⁴²

I am in hell

To be judged 'a good Sailor, a good officer and a good Man' was difficult in the close confines of a ship where it was almost impossible to escape the critical gaze of other men. '[S]hut up as it were in a box...' noted Claxton in his *Naval Monitor*, 'faults and errors, which would pass unnoticed in the world, here attract immediate attention'.⁴³ At stake for officers was both reputation and future financial security. Ordinary seaman, too, faced difficulties because so many of them had been pressed into service. All of them, but especially the officers, were very much 'on show' so that their life was to some extent a 'performance' in which they were not only judged by their skill in carrying out their duties but also by the 'balance and self-control' they displayed in their social relationships.⁴⁴ The degree of difficulty in an officer's performance was increased by the possibility of financial reward, the very thing that both attracted men of modest means to the navy and made it a viable profession for them. As Greg Denning tells us, there was no anomaly as great as that between 'the rhetoric of disinterested loyalty of fighting for the Crown and the self-interested possibility of making private fortunes in that fighting'. The calculation of prize money, says Denning, 'was as regulated as shares of pirate plunder or as whalers' lays'. Prize money was thus a common bond between officers despite the origins of their birth, but it came very close to undermining the gentlemanly honour that naval officers from the middle state were trying to establish.⁴⁵

In these circumstances, honour in battle acquired novel nuances for aspiring gentlemen. For an aristocrat, failure in battle did not undermine his social standing or honour as long as he had behaved with courage (though failure to do so put their lives at risk, as the executions of Lieutenant Phillips and Admiral Byng showed). However, for the younger son of British gentry, or of a lawyer or merchant, failure snatched away

⁴² Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, London, 1790 (1719), pp. 2-3; Allan Horton, 'Southwell, Daniel (1764?-1797)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020426b.htm>> accessed 5/3/09; HN Dixon, 'Reminiscences of an Essex country practitioner a century ago', *The Essex Review*, vol. 23, October, 1914, pp. 193-194; Paul Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders: personal letters from an extraordinary life*, Hordern House in association with the Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002, pp. 38, 116, 124.

⁴³ Claxton, *The Naval Monitor*, pp. 198-199.

⁴⁴ Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, p. 31.

⁴⁵ Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, pp. 148-149.

the prize money that would establish his name and honour at home. Victory became a necessity for men who did not enjoy the inherited status of the aristocrat but could aspire to more than the wage-earning or labouring poor; men who only had their honour by which to maintain a fragile social status. It was this newly harsh imperative of honour that Adam Nicolson partly credits for the making of the 'English hero' in the Battle of Trafalgar. Nicolson argues persuasively that Nelson and his comrades defined the hero in whom the seeming paradoxes of overt self-interest and genuine patriotism, professional competence and unbridled aggression, self-control and intense brutality, taciturnity in the face of horror and 'violence phlegmatically done', were both necessary and necessarily forged in the blood of battle. Such men distrusted the affected sensibility of the eighteenth century and saw action as the antidote to effeminate hypocrisies.⁴⁶

Patriotism was usually the emotion used in efforts to reconcile the paradox of honour and fiscal interests. *The Odd Fellow's Magazine* found the mix of courage and self-interest to be the 'physical cause of the superiority of the English at sea'. The British sailor 'is always on the look-out, not with the fear of an enemy before his eyes, but like a strong pirate, with the hope of gain; and when going into action with an equal, or even a superior force, he calculates his profits as certainly as if the enemy were already taken'.⁴⁷ Merchant Wyndham Bowes similarly articulated the widely held belief that it was the nation's 'fundamental Maxim... that Trade is the Nursery of Sailors, that Sailors are the Soul of the Navy, that the Navy is the Security of Commerce, and that these two united, produce the Riches, Power and Glory of *Great-Britain*'.⁴⁸ Unfortunately this belief only held during peacetime: during war, the re-allocation of merchant marines to the navy jeopardised business interests and exasperated merchants.⁴⁹

The anomaly of disinterested loyalty to the crown and self-interested pursuit of financial prizes may have made the British seaman the brave man he was, the sort of man that could achieve victory in a battle like Trafalgar, but it did not erase the 'mingling of war, piracy, commerce and exploration' that had been characteristic of Britain's maritime

⁴⁶ Nicolson, *Men of Honour*, pp. 26, 114, 192-194, 215, 316.

⁴⁷ *The Odd Fellow's Magazine, Thespian Journal, And Monthly Novelist: Being a Vehicle of Genuine Humour, Inoffensive Wit, And Rational Entertainment: Consisting of Interesting Extracts From Popular, Scarce, And Expensive Works; The Whole Enriched with Valuable Original Pieces, Written Expressly for the Work. Embellished with Interesting Engravings*, Numb. 1, January 1808, Price 8D, p. 10.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, p. 78.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

world since the Elizabethan era'.⁵⁰ In this context Nelson and his 'band of brothers' might be seen as 'sanctioned villains', argues Adam Nicolson, because the oscillation between 'intense risk and predatory gain' for which they were popularly heroised, was a trait they had in common with successful thieves.⁵¹ To add to the tensions, thieves may well have been part of their crew. During the rapid expansion of the navy in the 1790s, only a small percentage of seamen were true volunteers; more than half the average crews was obtained by press-gangs. This situation was exacerbated by the Quota System after 1795 under which parishes and counties offered up actual criminals to fill their quota. At the same time Britain's burgeoning jail population overflowed into hulks on the Thames and many men sentenced to death or transportation appealed for clemency through service in the navy or army.⁵² Increased tensions could, and often did, erupt in mutiny. The incident on the *Bounty* in 1789, highly publicised and closely scrutinised at the time, is perhaps the most extensively studied example of mutiny during a century in which it was not uncommon. Yet its details are worth reconsidering as the incident keenly illustrates the tensions of pursuing financial security, independence of action, adventure and social mobility in a career at sea.

It appears that the relationship between Captain William Bligh and midshipman Fletcher Christian, in which neither could be comfortably cast in the role of either perpetrator or victim, was at the heart of the problems on the *Bounty*. In this relationship the anomalies of naval service were played out on a personal level.⁵³ Bligh had not made captain in the expected time. Captain James Cook, in the traditional way of choosing young gentlemen and guiding them to promotion, should have helped Bligh on his way but Cook's death thwarted Bligh's ambitions. When it was belatedly Bligh's turn to captain, he chose his young gentlemen, including Fletcher Christian, from the circle of patrons and family connections to whom he owed some social obligation. At a time when authority on ships was achieved either through social status – being born to power and given a commission – or from years of experience and learning under warrant, Bligh on the *Bounty* was the only 'commissioned' officer and in being his own purser he was also 'warranted'. Cook had done this before him, but it was a dangerous

⁵⁰ Michael Roe, 'Charles Bishop, Pioneer of Pacific Commerce', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol. 10 (1), July, 1962, p. 13.

⁵¹ Nicolson, *Men of Honour*, p. 171.

⁵² For example, Edward Pearce's petition for clemency said he was 'fully impressed with the sense of his guilt; if Majesty saves his life will be content to exert every hour of it to expiate the crimes he has committed against society, in any part of the world your Majesty shall deem proper'; April 1789, HO 47/8/2 – 56, Petitions for clemency, UKNA, HO 47/8.

⁵³ Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 75-77.

combination. Bligh confounded the sources of shipboard authority on a ship that was itself ambiguously positioned as both navy and mercantile, an armed vessel and a ship of discovery. And by putting himself in charge of all the financial affairs of the expedition he confounded even further the disinterested pursuit of the expedition's mission and the self-interested pursuit of profit.⁵⁴

Fletcher Christian was a midshipman, an anomalous position on any ship, belonging by virtue of birth with the officers on the quarterdeck and thus in authority over the seamen on the lower deck, but neither position had been gained through experience. Moreover, Christian was raised by captain's orders to acting lieutenant just three months into the *Bounty's* voyage. Thus Christian owed Bligh a social debt and, to make matters murky, a financial debt (through a credit dealing that was commonly made but liable to cause ill-feeling) in an environment in which it was hard to define the extent of power that officers might be allowed over midshipmen.⁵⁵ Christian claimed gentlemanly solidarity with Bligh which Bligh accepted: he recorded that he was on 'the most friendly terms' with the younger man. On the very day of the mutiny, Christian was engaged to dine with Bligh whose suspicions had not been aroused when Christian excused himself from 'supping' with him 'on pretence of being unwell'. Bligh said he had 'no suspicion of his integrity and honour'. The ambiguities in the relationship appear to have taken their toll on Christian. When Bligh asked him if mutiny was 'a proper return' for many instances of 'friendship' he replied, 'that – Captain Bligh – that is the thing; – I am in hell – I am in hell'.⁵⁶

In 1815 in *The Naval Monitor*, Lieutenant Christopher Claxton articulated the anomalies that the mutiny on the *Bounty* had revealed. His advice to midshipmen on how to negotiate them included dealing with superiors (recognise a bad officer by his swearing; run, don't walk when given an order; don't smile during or after a reprimand 'or look contemptuously or pertly'; never refuse to dine or breakfast with the officers when invited) and dealing with the men on the lower deck (never be unnecessarily harsh or strike them, don't be too free with them, or take liberties). There was a balance that needed to be achieved; a balance between giving offence and being intimate; a balance between discipline and indulgence.⁵⁷ A balance that neither Bligh nor Christian achieved.

⁵⁴ Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, pp. 20-28.

⁵⁵ Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, pp. 70, 140-141, 69; Claxton, *The Naval Monitor*, p. 215.

⁵⁶ *The Times*, 7 September 1790.

⁵⁷ Claxton, *The Naval Monitor*, pp. 137, 138, 141, 143, 145, 201, 221, 236; Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, pp. 140-141.

Sea voyaging could be as confounding for passengers as it was for naval officers and seamen – beginning with the word ‘emigrant’ which cabin and intermediate passengers felt did not refer to them; emigrants were those with financial assistance.⁵⁸ In the confines of a ship the existing minutiae of interpersonal relationships were intensified, as numerous men recorded.⁵⁹ James Henty’s diary described how Mr Dyball insulted ‘Capt. V’ at breakfast ‘without provocation’. Henty defended the captain and ‘called Mr Dyball’s conduct ungentlemanly to his face’. Edward Eyre recalled similar ‘interruptions’ to the ‘harmony’ of shipboard life – ‘little flirtations, some unkind gossipings, some petty jealousies, some imagined affronts, some temporary coolnesses and once or twice some difficulties of greater magnitude’. Eyre was lead twice ‘into a pugilistic encounter’. The first time was in defence of ‘little Mr. Lambert from a great huge fellow who had bullied him’ and the second was ‘over a dispute at cards’ which he had resolved never to play but he had weakened ‘in an evil hour’. It is interesting to note that in men’s writings it is the ‘unkind gossipings’, ‘petty jealousies’, and the, often physical, disputes with other *men*, that warranted such detailed description.⁶⁰

This delicate balance in social relations was not such a feature of whaling and sealing vessels which also offered men both financial prospects and the opportunity to prove their mettle. And if these industries did not promise increased social mobility to men of the middling classes, they did tempt men of the lower classes with a measure of autonomy. A civilising Britain relied on the whaling and sealing industries for light after sundown, oil for the treatment of metals, leather and jute, and furs that fed the desires of British consumers looking for novelty and luxury. The industries held an aura of excitement. John Webster remembered the festival air surrounding the annual return of whaling vessels to his Scottish sea-port home: the garlands of ribbons flying from mast-heads, along with a joint of meat attached on leaving, still fresh and testimony to the icy conditions in which the whalers had worked. Webster and his schoolmates were excited and ‘privileged’ to be aboard the ships when the hatches were removed and the blubber exposed.⁶¹ Thomas Melville described his crew’s similar enthusiasm at

⁵⁸ Emma Curtin, ‘Gentility Afloat: Gentlewomen’s Diaries and the Voyage to Australia, 1830-80’, *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 26 (105), 1995, p. 638.

⁵⁹ Margarette Lincoln, ‘Mutinous Behavior on Voyages to the South Seas and Its Impact on Eighteenth-Century Civil Society’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 31 (1), Winter, 2007, p. 65.

⁶⁰ James Henty, Diary, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS 7739, Box 117/2, Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1859 (1984), p. 30; see also John Mulvaney and Neville Green (ed), *Commandant of Solitude: The Journals of Captain Collet Barker 1828-1831*, Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 1992, p. 48.

⁶¹ Webster, *Reminiscences of an Old Settler in Australian and New Zealand*, pp. 1, 5.

seeing 'sperm whales in great plenty' within fifteen leagues of the latitude of Port Jackson and just three leagues from shore: 'We sailed through different shoals of them from twelve o'clock in the day till after sun-set, all round the horizon, as far as I could see from the mast-head.' Melville claimed, with 'pleasure', to be the first to take sperm whale off the Australian coast in 1791.⁶²

Both whaling and sealing attracted men from varied backgrounds, from so-called 'respectable' men to runaway convicts and seamen, especially younger men for whom the attractions of risk and freedom and the opportunity to earn manhood were represented as particularly alluring.⁶³ In the Australian colonies, Quaker missionary James Backhouse observed that the whaling season was 'a time of excitement among young men on these coasts; they sometimes join the whalers, who are generally reckless, dissipated men'.⁶⁴ Not simply reckless and dissipated, they were also 'quite independent... every fellow appears the Master...' This was the opinion of Captain Foster Fyans who arrived at Portland Bay in June 1839 when the village's usual population of fifty had swelled to nearly three hundred for the whaling season.⁶⁵ Unfortunately, the independence, profits and requirements for extraordinary seamanship and fearlessness offered by whaling and sealing were undermined by the conditions of the work. Drunkenness, venereal disease (and its treatment with mercury), and excessive labour made sailors old before their time and shortened their life expectancy.⁶⁶ This was not an easy business, as Edwyn Henry Statham described in a letter home: 'very inadequate is the idea i [sic] have given you of the labour & toil in wet, smoke & grease, with scarce 9 hours sleep out of 48, which we have to endure to procure that luxury for the great'.⁶⁷

⁶² John Hunter, *An Historical Journal of Events at Sydney and at Sea 1787-1792 by Captain John Hunter, Commander H.M.S. Sirius, with further accounts by Governor Arthur Phillip, Lieutenant P.G. King, and Lieutenant H.L. Ball*, Angus & Robertson in association with the Royal Australian Historical Society, Sydney, 1793 (1968), pp. 369-371.

⁶³ Emma Christopher, 'Ten Thousand Times Worse than the Convicts': Rebellious Sailors, Convict Transportation and the Struggle for Freedom, 1781-1800', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 5 2004, pp. 32-38; Margaret S. Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830-1870*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995.

⁶⁴ James Backhouse, *A Narrative of A Visit to the Australian Colonies*, Johnson Reprint edition 1967, Hamilton, Adams and Co, London, 1843, p. 484.

⁶⁵ Marnie Bassett, *The Hentys: An Australian Colonial Tapestry*, Oxford University Press, London, 1954, p. 421.

⁶⁶ JC Byrne, *Twelve Year's Wanderings in the British Colonies. From 1835 to 1847. Vol 2*, Richard Bentley, London, 1848, p. 43; Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, pp. 174-175.

⁶⁷ Edwyn Henry Statham to Francis Freeman Statham, 1 December 1833, Edwyn Henry Statham – letters, ML, MSS 7281.

Become good, and even opulent men

In the earliest days of the Australian colonies, where for the first forty years colonists looked out to the ocean rather than inwards to the interior of the continent, the promises of whaling, sealing and naval careers seemed fulfilled.⁶⁸ Men of relatively humble backgrounds, from convicts to governors, raised their social positions and prospered financially. Land-based activities, however, rapidly replaced the promises of ocean ventures.

Sealing was such lucrative trade that former convicts James Underwood and Henry Kable defied a prohibition on ship-building, that was instigated to protect the East India Company's monopoly. Their own sloop *Diana* operated in the Bass Strait after July 1800. They exported sealskins in ships controlled by free-immigrant merchant Robert Campbell and his Calcutta partners who had an agent in Canton until the depressed state of the China market saw Campbell join emancipist businessman Simeon Lord and his valuable London connection. Lord and Campbell exported the first oil and sealskins to Britain in 1803. These men led the way in directing local interest to whaling and sealing in southern waters.⁶⁹ But British interest in southern whaling pre-dated this. Thomas Melville was off the coast of Port Jackson because his firm, Samuel Enderby and Sons, had arranged for whalers to carry convicts to Port Jackson in the Third Fleet. The news of what he had seen put all the whalers in Port Jackson 'to a stir', but Melville received 'every assistance' from the interested Governor Arthur Phillip and his captains King, Parker and Ball, and made the first successful kill of sperm whale off the coast of Australia.⁷⁰ Here were sources of wealth that seemed open to any man with the necessary courage and skill; and financiers, agents and merchants could experience the thrills vicariously as they recorded the catch and counted the profits.

Arthur Phillip, the first governor appointed to the Australian colonies, was one of those men of modest means who benefited from Britain's eighteenth century naval expansion. So were his three successors and the first governor of South Australia. Phillip was the son of a poor seaman who died an admiral and left an estate worth about £25,000. Phillip's successor John Hunter was the son of shipmaster who ended

⁶⁸ Russel Ward and John Robertson (eds), *Such Was Life: Select Documents in Australian Social History 1788-1850*, Ure Smith, Sydney, 1969, p. 81.

⁶⁹ Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A history. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, pp. 218-219, 274; DR Hainsworth, 'Kable, Henry (1763-1846)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020028b.htm>> accessed 13/3/09.

⁷⁰ KM Dallas, 'Enderby, Samuel (1756-1829)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010340b.htm>> accessed 16/3/03; Hunter, *Historical Journal*, pp. 369-371.

his days as a high-ranking naval officer. William Bligh, fourth governor of New South Wales and son of a boatman and land waiter in the customs service, rose to the rank of vice-admiral. John Hindmarsh, first governor of South Australia and son of a ship's gunner, had served at Trafalgar, was knighted, and reached the rank of rear admiral by his retirement. The first governor of Western Australia James Stirling was also a naval officer, awarded a knighthood, and reached the rank of admiral before dying in comfortable retirement. But he had better connections at birth: his mother was the daughter of an admiral and her brother was given a baronetcy. Philip Gidley King was the governor whose naval career moved him away from his family's land-bound origins. He was the son of a draper and his grandfather was an attorney. King's critics in New South Wales seemed to share Sir Walter Elliot's objection to the Royal navy 'bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction', although King's family was respectable and financially secure, they described him as 'not a gentleman'.⁷¹

King's two illegitimate sons followed him into the navy and rose to the rank of lieutenant, but two of his daughters married and settled in New South Wales: Anna Maria married Hannibal Macarthur from the prosperous pastoral family.⁷² Such a move was one small sign of a turn inland away from the sea: a move that was coterminous with the changing fate of naval officers and seamen in Britain, whose prospects all but dried up after the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. Nearly a third of a million discharged soldiers and sailors returned home in the next two years. In 1817, there were 3,300 lieutenants alone, on half-pay with little hope of promotion or of active employment. This benefited the growing civil service including the Colonial Office, which emerged under Lord Bathurst between 1815 and 1827, that employed ex-service officers to fill administrative posts to manage the lands that Britain's triumphs at sea had now increased.⁷³ The profits to be made in land were acknowledged by seafaring men including governors Hindmarsh and Stirling who took up their positions in 1836 and 1829 respectively. Hindmarsh invested heavily in land in and around Adelaide the sales of which netted £12,000 in 1841, making his account the largest by far in the Adelaide branch of the Bank of Australasia. Stirling received a grant of 100,000 acres

⁷¹ BH Fletcher, 'Phillip, Arthur (1738-1814)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020292b.htm>>; JJ Auchmuty, 'Hunter, John (1737-1821)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010529b.htm>>; AGL Shaw, 'Bligh, William (1754-1817)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010111b.htm>>; 'Hindmarsh, Sir John (1785-1860)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010498b.htm>>; FK Crowley, 'Stirling, Sir James (1791-1865)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020448b.htm>>; AGL Shaw, 'King, Philip Gidley (1758-1808)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020052b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 11/3/09.

⁷² AGL Shaw, 'King, Philip Gidley (1758-1808)'.

⁷³ N Gash, 'After Waterloo: British Society and the Legacy of the Napoleonic Wars', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol. 28, 1978, pp. 147-149.

(40,469 ha) in Western Australia and was considered by his fellow colonists to be as much a settler and investor as a governor.⁷⁴

There was more bound up in land, however, than potential profits. The Edenic and redemptive nature of islands, particularly Pacific islands at this time, was also at play. The south seas held a place in the British imagination that was almost synonymous with adventure and opportunity. British ships found it difficult to return home with a fully crewed vessel after a south sea whaling voyage. The problem was sometimes money – an unsuccessful cruise did not promise enough money to sustain the seamen during the long voyage back to Britain – but there was a commonly held perception that it was ‘the beauty of the Pacific Islands, the ease with which life is supported there, and the loose and seducing manners of the Aboriginal women... [that] weaken[ed] the fidelity of the crew’.⁷⁵ When Bligh laid blame for his crew’s mutinous behaviour on the seductive Tahitian women he was playing on a long-held British perception of a connection between mutiny and a life of ease, freedom and pleasure.⁷⁶ But islandic potential for sensuous indulgence, unfettered appetite, and indolence was counterbalanced at the turn of the nineteenth century by islandic potential for recuperation from the effects of civilisation. This notion seemed proven by reports of the fate of some of the *Bounty* mutineers and the convicts of the First Fleet to New South Wales.

The *Bounty* mutineers and their Tahitian ‘wives’ were discovered by an American whaling vessel on Pitcairn Island in 1808. Reports of the island and its community over the following years were both Crusoe- and Rousseau-esque. The island itself was ‘extremely healthy’ producing ‘with very little labour, all the necessaries of life, and some of its luxuries’. The neat and regular houses of the village were surrounded by groves of shady trees. The young men were all ‘athletic’ with fine forms and ‘open and pleasing’ countenances; the women were ‘tall, robust, beautifully formed’, good-humoured and modest, ‘perfectly chaste’ and with good teeth. With their ‘simple diet’, ‘daily habit of rising early’, and ‘exercise in the cultivation of their grounds, it was not surprising that visitors ‘found them so athletic and free from complaints’.⁷⁷ All had the features of ‘honest English’ faces, were wonderfully hospitable and lived harmoniously and tranquilly, ‘in a state of primitive purity’ and ‘primeval innocence’ in their ‘little

⁷⁴ ‘Hindmarsh, Sir John (1785-1860)’, FK Crowley, ‘Stirling, Sir James (1791-1865)’.

⁷⁵ Byrne, *Twelve Year’s Wanderings*, p. 46.

⁷⁶ Lincoln, ‘Mutinous Behavior’, p. 75.

⁷⁷ Frederick W Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Beering’s Strait*, Colburn and Bentley, London, 1831, pp. 96-136; John Barrow, *A Description of Pitcairn’s Island and its Inhabitants with An Authentic Account of the Mutiny of the Ship Bounty, and of the Subsequent Fortunes of the Mutineers*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1845, pp. 250, 254-256, 273, 274, 281.

garden of paradise'. It was 'enchanted', said the press. The sole surviving mutineer, John Adams (the assumed name of crew member Alexander Smith), was now a venerable patriarch who had trained his population 'in the principles of piety and virtue' and the captain of the whaling vessel who first spoke to him was able to forget the 'unhappy deed' that had brought him to the island and hoped that his behaviour since would earn him clemency should he ever return to England.⁷⁸

There is a Crusoe reference among the Pitcairn Islanders that receives no comment in contemporary reports. Fletcher Christian's first-born son, by his Tahitian 'wife', was named Thursday October Christian, marking the day on which he was born. When visitors discovered that the islanders' calendar was off by one day, some accounts began to call him 'Friday'. Defoe's Crusoe also lost a day in his reckoning leading to the conclusion that the original Friday had been misnamed.⁷⁹ The fate of Thursday October Christian confirmed British portrayals of the 'purity' of the islanders. He was among a group of Pitcairn Islanders taken to Tahiti in 1831 where, among the 'corrupt' people of that island, Thursday and almost a dozen of his companions succumbed to fatal disease.⁸⁰ The dissipated seaman and mutineer turned pious patriarch, and the physically fine and morally pure natures of that mutineers' descendants seemed to confirm the benefits of a more 'primitive' life, safe from the luxuries and corruptions of civilisation.

By the time reports of the Pitcairn Islanders were published, the early Australian colonies had also shown some of this regenerative potential. One commentator had gone as far as describing Norfolk Island as 'a habitation for the soul', a 'retreat' for a 'dreamer, idealist... some Wild Rousseau'.⁸¹ Given the popular imagining of the south seas as the location of both political agitation and a life of freedom and ease, there appears to be some irony in the British government's choice of a penal colony in New South Wales as their solution to overcrowded jails, but it was this hope for rehabilitation that underlay the logistics and practicalities of the government's planning. Arthur Phillip made this clear as he was ceremonially installed as governor of New South Wales: on

⁷⁸ *Caledonian Mercury*, 17 November 1823; *The Morning Chronicle*, 6 January 1832; *The Times*, 16 December 1816; *The Times*, 19 September 1822.

⁷⁹ 'PITCAIRN'S ISLAND', *The Hull Packet and Original Weekly Commercial, Literary and General Advertiser*, 21 October 1817; David Marshall, 'Autobiographical Acts in *Robinson Crusoe*', *ELH*, vol. 71, 2004, p. 916.

⁸⁰ 'INHABITANTS OF PITCAIRN'S ISLAND', *The Morning Chronicle*, 6 January 1832.

⁸¹ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 11 August 1835.

this occasion he told the convicts they had the opportunity not only 'to expiate their offences', but also 'to become good, and even opulent men'.⁸²

The First Fleet to New South Wales comprised 1373 men, women and children on two Royal navy ships, six convict transports and three store ships. There were a dozen officials, two of them married; 245 marines with thirty-one wives and twenty-three children; 543 male and 189 female convicts, with twenty-two children; a handful of civilians; and 306 officers and sailors. There had been some selection of both convicts and seamen for age and skills; only one per cent of the group were over fifty years of age. They were a nascent community. On shore, the convicts were not imprisoned: they were not shackled during the day or locked up at night and after they finished their official labour for the colony they were free to work for themselves or for others. Their loss of legal rights and liberty was met simply by being 'beyond the seas'.⁸³

Like the *Bounty's* mutineers on Pitcairn island, the First Fleeters at Port Jackson experienced hardships and disharmony in their early months. The first convict to be granted land was James Ruse. That was in November 1789. By the end of 1791 he had thirty acres and was supporting himself and his family without help from the government store. The government farms and those of civil and military officers, marines, and other convicts were also making progress. After the initial hardships, which were indeed severe, the First Fleeters enjoyed good food and a benign climate. Women who had seemed infertile produced children and these children, well-fed and free of the usual childhood diseases, grew as much as six inches taller than their parents. There had been a steady, though slow, improvement in behaviour among the convicts and few of the First Fleeters were involved in the spates of violence and theft that followed the arrival of the second and third fleets.⁸⁴ This appeared to demonstrate what James Matra, an original proponent of the colony, had told the Home Office in 1784: that convicts given 'a few Acres of Ground... in absolute Property, with what assistance they may want to till them' had every chance of becoming 'useful' and 'moral Subjects of Society'.⁸⁵

⁸² Quoted in Alan Frost, 'First fleeters (act. 1788)', ODNB, online edn, Oxford University Press, October 2008, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/theme/96370>> accessed 2/3/2009.

⁸³ Alan Frost, 'First fleeters'.

⁸⁴ Frost, 'First fleeters'; Peter Taylor, *Australia: The First Twelve Years*, Sydney and Boston, Allen & Unwin, 1982; John B Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies: A History of Early New South Wales*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1983, p. 193.

⁸⁵ George Mackaness, *Some Proposals for Establishing Colonies in the South Seas*, Reprint edition, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1943 (1976), p. 46.

Ploughing the land, ploughing the deep

The Australian colonies were not, of course, island communities, but more than one of the first settlers referred to their new home as an 'island'.⁸⁶ While colonist's incomes came from whaling, sealing and trading by sea, and they were governed by naval officers, it is understandable that they might imagine the colonies as such. It may have been the lure of the sea that drew so many of the men to the early colonies, but almost as quickly as men disembarked, their gazes turned towards the interior of the continent and the 'wide open spaces' of the 'bush'.⁸⁷ Opportunities for naval adventure, fortune and glory disappeared after 1815. By the 1840s sealing was all but over – the industry destroyed by its own destructive practices – and whaling was in serious decline. So it was that one time whaler Edwyn Hentry Statham turned farmer, joining many other sea-faring men who established land-bound lives: like master mariner James McMeckan who became a shipping agent; seaman Michael Howe who turned to highway robbery in the south of England and then bushranging in Van Diemen's Land; merchant marine John Bingle who arrived in Port Jackson as a settler; and lieutenant George Hunn Nobbs who became a pastor and schoolteacher on Pitcairn Island in response to his mother's dying injunction: 'Go to Pitcairn Island, my son, dwell there, and the blessing of God rest upon you'.⁸⁸

Despite a turn to the interior of the continent, by emancipists, emigrants, and colonial administrators, the language with which men described their engagement with their environment did not change. The 'rover's life' made possible by 'the wide unbounding Sea' was just as possible in the 'wide open spaces' of the 'bush'.⁸⁹ And this 'bush' held the promise of physical health and land ownership that the actuality of life at sea could not. Often drunk, diseased and facing shortened life expectancies, sailors' inability to adequately provide for wives and children at home distanced them from ideals of domestic manliness that became desirable as the nineteenth century wore on. Statham explained it to his brother: 'You will doubtless think it strange that I should turn farmer but it seemed the only thing suited to my present state of health, and besides it has so

⁸⁶ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, p. 41; Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, p. 10.

⁸⁷ Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1987 (1958), p. 79.

⁸⁸ GR Henning, 'McMeckan, James (1809-1890)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A050216b.htm>>; KR Von Stieglitz, 'Howe, Michael (1787-1818)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010522b.htm>>; Nancy Gray, 'Bingle, John (1796-1882)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010094b.htm>>; HE Maude, 'Nobbs, George Hunn (1799-1884)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020253b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 13/3/09. Nobbs married Fletcher Christian's granddaughter Sarah in 1831.

⁸⁹ *Five Popular Songs*, c1840s; Ward, *The Australian Legend*, p. 79.

many charms. There is almost as much pleasure in ploughing the land as ploughing the deep – and instead of setting sail we only have to substitute setting potatoes'. (Underlining in original text.)⁹⁰ In the words of poet John Clare, places 'where man has never trod... where woman never smil'd or wept' were the antidote for 'the living sea of waking dreams', the salve for 'the vast shipwreck of... life's esteems'.⁹¹ But the endurance of words with the suffix '-ship' (like friendship, fellowship and citizenship) attest to the appealing homosocial nature of seafaring lives.⁹² Unmoored from their etymologies these words were just as relevant for land-based lives.

On sailing into Sydney Harbour, Louise Meredith was struck with the 'remarkable clearness of the atmosphere'; 'everything, however remote, seeming to have such a *clean*, distinct outline, so different to the diffused effect of an English landscape'. Also in the harbour was a Scotch emigrant ship, its

'deck thronged with crowds of both sexes and all ages, enlivened by the fearful din of some half-dozen bagpipers, who were all puffing, squeezing, and elbowing away with incomparable energy and perseverance, though, as they all seemed to be playing different airs, the melody produced was rather of a complex character'.⁹³

Like so much else in Australia, the clarity was an illusion. Australia was not an island like Crusoe's, it was a vast continent, and white men brought to it, just as they brought to the ships that conveyed them from home, all their disquiet and uncertainties, their 'puffing, squeezing, and elbowing', their 'different airs' and 'complex character'. But this seemed no obstacle for men like Benjamin Boyce, son of a beer house keeper in Lincolnshire and recently arrived in South Australia in 1842, who expressed a common confidence among restless men. He was not one of those men 'a fraid to go from the smoke of their mothers chimney'. Like Robinson Crusoe, over sea or land, he had 'a rovin commishon throo the world'.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Edwyn Henry Statham to Hugh Worthington Statham, 4 September 1839, Edwyn Henry Statham – letters.

⁹¹ John Clare, *Selected Poems*, Penguin Books, London, 2000, p. 311.

⁹² Matt K Matsuda, "'This Territory Was Not Empty': Pacific Possibilities", *Geographical Review*, vol. 97 (2), April, 2007, p. 232.

⁹³ Louise Meredith, *Notes and Sketches of New South Wales* in Ward and Robertson (eds), *Such Was Life*, p. 266.

⁹⁴ Benjamin Boyce, Letter 1, 22 July 1842 in Eric Richards, 'A Voice From Below: Benjamin Boyce in South Australia, 1839-1846', *Labour History*, vol. (27), pp. 65-75, 1974, p. 71.

Chapter 5:

To think that this was all my own – land, independence and emigration

The world different and the same — I felt I was going to be a sort of Robinson Crusoe — Sole dominion over a morsel of land — Strong minds and tough sinews — If I can't do well in one place, I go to another — Advantages of civilisation without its evils?

'This was my dream', wrote Edward Gibbon Wakefield, author of *Sketch of a Proposal for Colonising Australasia* (1829),

I was shipwrecked and cast into the sea. I heard the shrieks of my shipmates who were drowning, and felt the pain of having my own head struck against a rock. My next impression was less disagreeable. I found myself, alone, but quite well, in Robinson Crusoe's island, walking up the green slope from the creek to the cave. Robinson came out by his ladder to meet me, and said with a smile – "Welcome! countryman." For my part, I embraced him tenderly, as on old and very dear friend'.¹

In this 'dream', Wakefield instructed Crusoe in the meaning of the new concepts of 'capitalist' and 'labour' and 'political economist', before an earthquake caused half of the island to be submerged in water. On waking, he realised that the 'modern economists', when considering the production and distribution of wealth, had overlooked the 'chief element of production; namely, the field in which capital and labour, are employed'. The only way, concluded Wakefield, for Crusoe and 'his man' Friday to get back to 'high profits' (surplus production) and 'high wages' (the fulfilment of needs and some comforts), would be by 'getting back the land they have lost'.²

¹ Edward Gibbon Wakefield, *England and America. A Comparison of the Social and Political State of Both Nations*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1834, pp. 76-79.

² Ibid.

The importance of land in the British consciousness into the nineteenth century can not be underestimated,³ and the acquisition of land was at the heart of the colonial project, as attractive to European governments and monarchs as it was to individual men for whom land had long been associated with independence. It was especially appealing to British men whose relationship with land had been fundamentally altered by enclosures and changing agricultural practices. For many, working any land, let alone their own, was either remembered nostalgically as part of a golden past or dreamed of as part of a golden future.⁴ Memories of that golden past were kept current in the continuing popularity of stories from the classical world of Rome and Greece, in the lessons of the Bible, and in Britain's own newly revitalised ancient history. And man's relationship with land remained current in contemporary discourse, from John Locke and Adam Smith's economic theories in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to William Cobbett's radical politics of a 'cottage economy' in 1822, and Edwin Chadwick's emphasis on a 'want of open spaces' for 'healthy recreation' in his enquiry into the sanitary condition of the labouring population in 1830.⁵ At the same time dreams of a golden future were nurtured in Utopian fiction from Bacon's *New Atlantis*, 1627, to Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, 1726, which were read alongside accounts of actual adventures in and around Australia at the turn of the nineteenth century. And the common tropes of land and independence in these fiction and non-fiction works, both those that looked back and those that looked forward, were appropriated in literature that promoted emigration to the 'agrarian Arcadia' of the Australian colonies where manly independence – in all its senses from freedom from patronage to autonomy of action and opinion – seemingly 'lay within the settler's grasp'.⁶

This chapter investigates the common promises for men found in utopian fiction, biblical references, popular emigration literature and formalised proposals for colonisation and the way in which these themes were repeated in men's personal writings. It draws out the difficulty of dislodging the link between manly independence and ownership of land, or working the land at the very least, despite contemporary

³ Robert Grant, "'The Fit and Unfit': Suitable Settlers for Britain's Mid-Nineteenth-Century Colonial Possessions', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, vol. 33, 2005, p. 171.

⁴ Carol Lansbury describes the loss of 'Arcady' as 'one of the most potent myths of the early nineteenth century'. Carol Lansbury, *Arcady in Australia: The Evocation of Australia in Nineteenth-Century English Literature*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1970, p. 154.

⁵ Edwin Chadwick, *Report to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department from the Poor Law Commissioners on an Inquiry into the sanitary condition of the labouring population of Great Britain, with appendices*, Printed by W. Clowes, for H. M. Stationery Off., 1842, pp. 275, 277.

⁶ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*, Yale University Press, London, 1999, p. 111; John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on gender, family and empire*, Pearson Longman, Harlow, England, 2005, p. 183.

commentators' attempts to use the language of 'independence' in relation to newer opportunities, like trade and the professions, offered in urban environments. Individual men negotiated these changing circumstances through a variety of practices: they retired to the country after success in business; they continued agricultural work alongside other occupations; or they moved between paid commercial employment and independent agricultural activity and back again as circumstances allowed or dictated. This was the case for men across the social spectrum and as evident in the Australian colonies as in Britain, despite the rhetoric of opportunity that said life in Australia would be different. While land in Britain seemed to be an exhausted resource, land in Australia was subject to ongoing contention over allocation, price, legality and debates about the sort of men fit to own it. The goals of land and independence were relentlessly moved. The result was restless men who projected their unsettledness on Indigenous Australian men in depictions of them on 'walkabout'.

The world different and the same

The genre of utopian fiction has a long history and much of it was situated on a great southern continent, the idea of which had existed in European culture long before Dutch navigator Willem Janszoon first sighted the coast of Cape York Peninsula in 1606, and Francois Pelsaert was shipwrecked off the coast of present-day Western Australia in 1629.⁷ The concept of 'terra australis incognita' dated back to Roman times, was common in medieval geography and literature, and remained 'the hardest of geographic illusions'.⁸ In his *Divine Comedy* at the beginning of the fourteenth century, Dante, emerged from the circles of Hell to find himself in the antipodes exactly opposite Jerusalem.⁹ Three hundred years later, Henry Neville's political lampoon in pamphlet form told of the discovery of the 'ten or twelve thousand' descendants of one man and four women, the only survivors of a shipwreck near the coast of 'Terra Australia Incognita' in the time of Queen Elizabeth.¹⁰ The antipodes 'offered one of the

⁷ Jan Bassett, *Great Southern Landings: An Anthology of Antipodean Travel*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995, p. xiii.

⁸ John Noble Wilford, *The Mapmakers*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 1981, p. 138.

⁹ Alighieri Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, Pan Books, London, 1981, Canto XXXIV, p. 194; George Mackaness, *Some Fictitious Voyages to Australia*, Reprint edition, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1937 (1979), p. 5.

¹⁰ Henry Neville, 'The Isle of Pines', in Mackaness, *Some Fictitious Voyages*, p. 7.

last places on earth where one could dream of a different, better world that had not yet been entirely ruled out as a possibility'.¹¹

From Gabriel de Foigny's *La Terre Australe Connue*, 1693 and Denis Vairasse d'Allais's, *Histoire des Sevarambes*, 1679, to *Cacklogallinia*, 1727, shipwrecks were just one of the features that blurred the boundaries between fact and fiction in utopian tales, as we have already seen in adventure stories. Although the author of *Cacklogallinians* was given as Captain Samuel Brunt, it was possibly a pseudonym for Jonathan Swift, author of the most well-known imaginings of lands over the sea, *Gulliver's Travels*, 1726.¹² The latitude Swift gave as the destination to which Gulliver was blown by a violent storm to the north-west of Van Diemen's Land, put Lilliput somewhere in Western Australia.¹³ Disconcertingly, Swift also claimed Gulliver to be a cousin of William Dampier, the first Englishman to visit and write about Australia.¹⁴

Similarly, *Fragmens du Dernier Voyage de La Perouse*, 1797, was said to be the journal of a member of La Perouse's expedition stolen in Botany Bay in 1788. For almost two hundred years it was thought to be genuine rather than the Pacific utopia that it is, including by historian and authority on the European discovery of Australia Ernest Scott.¹⁵ Just as the preface of a 1790 edition of *Robinson Crusoe* told readers that it was 'a just history of facts; neither is there any appearance of fiction in it', the publisher's note to d'Allais's, *Histoire des Sevarambes*, reminded skeptical readers – those who had read Plato's *Commonwealth*, More's *Utopia* and Bacon's *New Atlantis* – that America, Peru, Mexico and China were 'taken for Romances by many' until time proved them 'verities not to be doubted of'.¹⁶

In envisaging better societies somewhere over the seas, utopian stories always began among the vexations of the author's own society. English clergyman Joseph Hall's moral satire titled *Mundus Alter ed Idem* – 'the world different and the same' – mocked the Roman church and its eccentricities in an upside-down world peopled by gluttons,

¹¹ Paul Arthur, *Virtual Voyages: Travel Writing and the Antipodes 1605-1837*, Anthem Press, London and New York, 2010, p. xx.

¹² It has also been suggested that it was Daniel Defoe: Philip Babcock Gove, *The Imaginary Voyage in Prose Fiction*, Arno Press, New York, 1974, p. 259.

¹³ Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, Collector's Library, London, 2004 (1726), p. 91; Mackaness, *Some Fictitious Voyages*, p. 5.

¹⁴ Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 397.

¹⁵ Bassett, *Great Southern Landings*, pp. ix, 10-12.

¹⁶ Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, London, 1790, p. 1; Denis Vairasse d'Allais, *Histoire des Sevarambes*, Henry Brome, London, 1679, publisher's message.

fools, thieves and women, and *Cacklogallinia* was a thinly-veiled admonishment of a perceived decline in British society.¹⁷ In the eighteenth century, society's problems were invariably represented as perversions, or excesses, of civilisation. As a fictional La Perouse was said to have claimed 'a hundred times', if it was not for his duty to his King, and his honour in upholding that duty, he would have left Europe 'for ever' to live in the 'true abode of happiness and peace' of the 'Blue Islands' where the people had attained the condition that Europeans could have if they gave up all their 'works of fiction', their 'follies', 'pomp', 'systems' and 'dreaming'.¹⁸ Politics, therefore, was at the heart of utopian endeavour which is why the publisher of *Histoire des Sevarambes*, was so eager to have the book taken as non-fiction: it was 'the most perfect model of Government [he had] ever read or heard of in [his] life'.¹⁹

A particular political thought exercising men's minds in the eighteenth century was republicanism, with its emphasis on liberty and rights in America, horrifyingly rearticulated through the French Revolution at the end of the century, and contentiously used as a comparison between Britain and ancient Rome. Historian JGA Pocock explains that 'the republic' was historically fragile: 'Because it was virtuous it defeated its enemies; because it defeated its enemies it acquired empire; but empire brought to some citizens... the opportunity to acquire power incompatible with equality and uncontrollable by law, and so the republic was destroyed by success and excess'. This was the history traced by Edward Gibbon in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 1776-1788. Although Gibbon concluded that it was despotism rather than luxury that undermined the republic's ability to defend itself, it was commerce, politeness and luxury that were commonly and widely associated with the decline of the state.²⁰ 'States have their rise and fall like every thing else', said *The Times* in 1790, 'and if this kingdom is ruined by luxury, dissipation, and effeminacy, it won't be the first on the list'. Headmaster Samuel Butler was still repeating the theme in 1826 in a lecture on the education of the poorer classes.²¹ It seemed, in Pocock's words, that 'no theory of human progress could be constructed which did not carry the

¹⁷ Bassett, *Great Southern Landings*, pp. xiii, 2-3; Mackaness, *Some Fictitious Voyages*, p. 6; Captain Samuel Brunt, *A Voyage to Cacklogallinia: With a Description of the Religion, Policy, Customs and Manners, of that Country*, Printed by J Watson, London, 1727, pp. 77-79.

¹⁸ Anonymous, *Fragmens du Dernier Voyage de La Perouse*, 1797, in Bassett, *Great Southern Landings*, pp. 10-12.

¹⁹ Vairasse d'Allais, *Histoire des Sevarambes*, publisher's message.

²⁰ JGA Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1985, pp. 145-148.

²¹ *The Times*, 23 January 1790; Samuel Butler, *The Life and Letters of Dr. Samuel Butler, Head-Master of Shrewsbury School 1798-1836, and Afterwards Bishop of Lichfield, in so far as they Illustrate the Scholastic, Religious, and Social Life of England, 1790-1840*, John Murray, London, 1896, p. 311.

negative implication that progress was at the same time decay, that culture entailed some loss of freedom and virtue'.²²

Australia, however, could be represented as an embryonic state still far from inevitable degeneracy. In early Sydney 'the mind is naturally led into reflections upon the origin and decay of nations', wrote convict artist Joseph Lycett, 'In these infant settlements of AUSTRALIA we probably behold the germs of a mighty empire'.²³ Similarly, William Charles Wentworth in his 1819 publication *Statistical, Historical, and Political Description of The Colony of New South Wales* gave a rendition of the story of Australia with an emphasis on men's independence, land ownership and representative government. It was, according to historian Alan Atkinson, a story in which New South Wales had not begun the Roman cycle of power, wealth and decline.²⁴ Transported convicts, however, were more likely to console themselves with republicanism's revolutionary promises. Ship's surgeon John Price recorded in his diary the convicts' plans to 'revolutionise' the Australian colonies and 'establish a republic there', with hopes of 'freedom, farms... & liberty to follow their different trades & professions'.²⁵

In 1782, Thomas Spence, a schoolteacher, bookseller and radical thinker, specifically combined political ideals with utopian fiction. Spence outlined his plan for European settlement of an island with few laws, no lawyers, complete religious freedom, intermarriage with its indigenous peoples, free schools, theatre and a library stocked with copies and translations of all the best books in the world, in a tale published in 1782 with the title *A Supplement to the History of Robinson Crusoe*.²⁶ Official plans for colonisation also reiterated themes from utopian literature, such as intermarriage with native populations, sanctuary for political refugees, and free grants of land, all of which were in the proposals of James Mario Matra and George Young for a settlement in New South Wales. Intermarriage, American loyalists and free settlers were removed from the plan that Lord Sydney sent to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury and

²² Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History*, pp. 147-148.

²³ Joseph Lycett, *Views in Australia*, J Souter, London, 1824, p. 14.

²⁴ Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 2 – Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2004, pp. 17-20.

²⁵ John Washington Price, *A Journal kept on board the Minerva Transport from Ireland to New South Wales*, by J. W. Price, Surgeon, British Library ADD MS 13880, pp. 9-10, 62.

²⁶ Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, Yale University Press, London, 2001; Thomas Spence, *A s'upl'im'int too thæi Hæistæire ov Robæinsæin Kruzo, bææing th'i h'ist'ire 'ov Kruzonea, or R'ob'ins'in Kruzo'z il'ind*, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1782, p. 108; HT Dickinson, 'Spence, Thomas (1750–1814)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/26112>>, accessed 16 March 2010.

the Lords of the Admiralty in 1786 in which New South Wales was simply recommended for effectively disposing of convicts. Charged with responsibility for the First Fleet, Arthur Phillip was also against intercourse with the country's indigenous people but he did see a place for seamen and marines to cultivate land.²⁷

I felt I was going to be a sort of Robinson Crusoe

Thomas Carlyle, too, saw solutions to the ills of British society over the seas where land could be found for Britain's surplus population. 'Now once more, as at the end of the Roman Empire...' he wrote, 'the Teutonic Countries find themselves too full'. But was there not, 'a whole vacant Earth, as it were, call[ing] to us, Come and till me, come and reap me!' There were unfelled forests and unploughed plains waiting to provide the work that all the 'briefless Barristers, chargeless Clergy, taskless Scholars' were in 'passionate want of'.²⁸ Carlyle's religious imagery and tone were not simply for effect. As historian Valerie Ross has remarked, life then had a 'biblical quality:' people understood 'the terms and allegory of what could have been their only book far better than we do now'.²⁹ The migration of people around the globe was a historical process understood by many, as it was for the first Presbyterian minister in the Australian colonies John Dunmore Lang, as the fulfillment of God's order to settle the earth following the flood.³⁰ It is not surprising, therefore, that among the 'remarkably consistent set of descriptive devices, rhetorical positions and ideological outlooks' that historian Robert D Grant has found in the diverse range of emigration literature regarding Britain's settler colonies, biblical imagery is one of the most pervasive.³¹

Direct quotes from the Bible set the tone for emigration guides: 'Be not therefore slothful to go and to enter to possess the land... a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth', the anonymous author of *A Voice From The Bush in Australia* quoted from Judges. 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will shew thee', quoted Alexander

²⁷ George Mackaness, *Some Proposals for Establishing Colonies in the South Seas*, Reprint edition, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1943 (1976), pp. 39, 46, 47, 52, 61.

²⁸ Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present and Chartism*, Wiley and Putnam, New York, 1847, pp. 382, 385.

²⁹ Valerie Ross, *Matthew Everingham: A First Fleeter and His Times*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1980, p. 73.

³⁰ Gregory Melleuish, 'Metahistory Strategies in Nineteenth-Century Australia', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 1 (2), August, 1998, p. 95.

³¹ Robert D Grant, *Representations of British Emigration, Colonisation and Settlement: Imagining Empire, 1800-1860*, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, 2005, p. xiii.

Marjoribanks from Genesis. '[I]n the words of Scripture...' said another author, 'when ye go ye shall come into a large land'.³² Australia's 'thousands of acres' were 'ready for the plough, as if especially prepared by the Creator for the industrious hands of Englishmen'.³³

Many historians have noted a relationship between religion and colonialism. Richard Waterhouse describes the 1913 centenary of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson's crossing of the Blue Mountains as celebrating 'the antipodean Israelites' crossing 'into the promised land'. Ann Curthoys and Deborah Bird Rose find foundational biblical stories like Genesis, Exodus and the Expulsion at the base of settler mythologies; Peter Harrison sees the Biblical exegesis of the Old Testament in Locke's formulation of land requiring active cultivation that legitimised seventeenth-century conceptions of colonisation; Richard Drayton contends that the economics of Genesis was the ideological well spring of empire, giving religious sanction to the application of science in making the world more productive; and Sujit Sivasundram sees a Protestant character in the 'agrarian patriotism' of the language used by evangelicals of the London Missionary Society who drew parallels between improvement of the land and spiritual improvement of individuals.³⁴

Men, at the time, used biblical imagery themselves. The Reverend Samuel Marsden told his friend John Stokes, in 1811, that he was following the intimations of 'Divine goodness'. 'Men who can', he wrote, 'should all beat their swords into plough shares, and follow the simple life found only in the field and garden. I have... fenced in more than 100 acres since my return'. In 1836, missionary James Backhouse dined with one of those men 'who, having been brought up to a military life, have beaten their swords

³² Anon, *A Voice From The Bush in Australia*, William Curry, Jun. and Company; Smith, Elder, and Company; John Johnstone, Dublin, London and Edinburgh, 1839, frontispiece; Alexander Marjoribanks, *Travels in New South Wales*, Smith, Elder & Co, London, 1847, title page; Anon, *Twenty Years Experience in Australia*, Smith, Elder & Co, London, 1839, pp. 127-128.

³³ Anon, *A Voice From The Bush*, p. 24; Anon, *Twenty Years Experience*, p. 13.

³⁴ Richard Waterhouse, 'The Vision Splendid: Conceptualizing the Bush, 1813-1913', *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 33 (1), Summer, 1999, p. 24; Ann Curthoys 'Mythologies', in Richard Nile (ed), *The Australian Legend and its Discontents*, University of Queensland Press, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 2000, pp. 16-17; Ann Curthoys, 'Does Australian History Have a Future?' *Challenging Histories: Reflections on Australian History*, *Australian Historical Studies*, special issue, vol. 33 (118), 2002, pp. 143-144; Deborah Bird Rose, 'Rupture and the Ethics of Care in Colonized Space', in Tim Bonyhady and Tom Griffiths (eds), *Prehistory to Politics: John Mulvaney, the Humanities and the Public Intellectual*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 205; John Gascoigne, 'The Expanding Historiography of British Imperialism', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 49 (2), 2006, pp. 577-59; Peter Harrison, "'Fill the Earth and Subdue it": Biblical Warrants for Colonization in Seventeenth Century England', *Journal of Religious History*, vol. 29 (1), February, 2005, pp. 3-24; Richard Drayton, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the 'Improvement' of the World*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2000; Sujit Sivasundaram, 'Natural History Spiritualized: Civilizing Islanders, Cultivating Breadfruit, and Collecting Souls', *History of Science*, vol. 39, 2001, p. 586.

into ploughshares'. Horatio Wills saw himself not simply as a farmer. He was a colonial Noah. Wills' overland expedition from the Molonglo area in New South Wales to the Port Phillip district included his wife, their young son, drovers, shepherds, Aboriginal stockmen, five hundred cattle and five thousand sheep. The party wintered in 1840 near Mount William in the Grampians, and Wills noted in his diary some years later that he had named the hill, Mount Ararat, 'for here, like the Ark, we rested'.³⁵

The sensation that they were the first civilised men to tread the earth of the antipodes was particularly noted. Of the birds on Rowe's Island, John Dunmore Lang remarked, 'As Cowper makes Robinson Crusoe say, "Their tameness was shocking to me"'.³⁶ And just as Crusoe was taken by the thought that he had fired the first gun on his island 'since the creation of the world', James Backhouse found something 'peculiarly interesting and affecting' in the idea of 'bringing the sound of the Gospel into this desolate part of the earth; where perhaps, since the days in which the world itself was called into existence, it was never before heard'.³⁷ It was the very isolation of the bush that could bring men closer to God, as Thomas Pringle exclaimed in an 1832 poem, 'Man is distant, but God is near!'.³⁸ This potential to find God once a man was removed from 'all the wickedness of the world' was an instantly recognisable feature of the Crusoe story. It was only alone and vulnerable that Crusoe found himself praying 'in the true sense of the words' for the first time in his life. When John Johnson in Van Diemen's Land, thought that he had to go into 'the bush' to pray, 'where he could make a great noise' in order for God to hear him, he was following Jesus, John the Baptist and Robinson Crusoe into the wilderness.³⁹

The 'immense tracts of the finest land, which was never before trodden by civilized man'⁴⁰ were arguably more attractive for their potential to confer independence from other men than the possibility of an autonomous relationship with God. 'If there is any safe and lawful way of living without intrigues, without lawsuits, without dependence on

³⁵ Letters from Marsden family to Mary and John Stokes, ML, MSS 719, CY175, [150]; James Backhouse, *A Narrative of A Visit to the Australian Colonies*, Johnson Reprint edition 1967, Hamilton, Adams and Co, London, 1843, p. 398; CE Sayers, 'Wills, Horatio Spencer Howe (1811-1861)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020548b.htm>>, accessed 22/10/2009.

³⁶ John Dunmore Lang, *Reminiscences of My Life and Times*, Edited with an introduction and notes by DWA Baker, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1972, p. 52.

³⁷ Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*, p. 65; Backhouse, *Narrative of A Visit*, p. 43.

³⁸ Lucy Frost, *No Place for a Nervous Lady: Voices From the Australian Bush*, Mcphee Gribble/Penguin Books, Fitzroy, Vic, 1984, p. 132; Thomas Pringle, *The Poetical Works of Thomas Pringle, With A Sketch of His Life, By Leitch Ritchie*, Edward Moxon, London, 1837, pp. 8-11.

³⁹ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, pp. 162, 121; Backhouse, *Narrative of A Visit*, p. 222.

⁴⁰ Anon, *A Voice From The Bush*, pp. 26-27.

others, it is, I admit, to live by the labour of our hands, by the cultivation of our own land;' wrote Rousseau, 'but where is the state in which a man can say, "The earth which I dig is my own?"'⁴¹ The Australian colonies were offered up as such a place. Charles Rowcroft's *Tales of the Colonies*, 1843, eloquently summed up the preoccupations of emigration literature: the return to a desired golden past, 'resuming the occupations of the patriarchs of old;' the possibility of subsistence, and even wealth, without patronage from the rich; the dignity of manual labour where there was no 'degradation' for an educated man to work 'with his own hands' on his own land; the potential to be 'in nearer contact with the Creator'; and that all this success would depend on a man's own 'labour' and 'prudence'. Significantly, all these facets of 'a new life' would see a man 'recover' his 'natural independence' and his 'natural dignity' – he would find 'that he is become of value as a MAN'.⁴²

In the hope of motivating British men who were 'wasting their time and means in useless and idle pursuits, to employ their talents in a land where manly exertions and persevering industry is certain to raise them to affluence and distinction', the authors of emigration literature were probably judicious in using Crusoe-esque descriptions: like an expedition leader 'dressed in a fur jacket, a conical crown, a shot-pouch and powder-horn slung across his shoulders, a pair of long spurs on his heels, and a double-barrelled gun in his hand;' or a 'native boy' servant 'whose chief delight is to play with the monkeys of various sizes, look after the dogs of all breeds, and feed the parroquets that fly above the dwelling'.⁴³ Such descriptions invoked in readers both the familiarity and the excitement of the Robinson Crusoe story. Edward Landor probably wrote of his knowledge of Australia as being similar in character to Robinson Crusoe's island for the same reason. His stated purpose in publishing *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country* was to make the colony in Western Australia more familiar to those at home.⁴⁴

Crusoe-esque references, however, were also used in writings from the early Australian colonies where there was no discernible motive for doing so. Reverend Samuel Marsden sounded like Crusoe when he wrote of himself in 1796 as 'a Gardener a Farmer a Magistrate & Minister'. Similarly, brothers Robert and

⁴¹ Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Émile*, JM Dent, London, 1974 (1762), p. 421.

⁴² Charles Rowcroft, *Tales of The Colonies; Or, The Adventures of an Emigrant*, 3rd edition, Smith, Elder and Co, London, 1845 (1843), p. xii.

⁴³ Anon, *A Voice From The Bush*, pp. 15, 25-26; the monkeys, not indigenous to Australia, are a clue to the fantasy of this description.

⁴⁴ Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, pp. 10, 436.

George Dixon, in 1821, described making their own soap and butchering their own meat and being proud of their self-sufficiency.⁴⁵ Brothers Robert and Helenus Scott took from Sydney everything they needed for cooking, baking, washing, and farming as well as three horses, a cart, and seven 'Government Men' (convicts) that included a blacksmith, a shoemaker, a carpenter, a wheelwright, a harness maker, and two sawyers, following Crusoe's example when he returned to his island with two carpenters, a smith, a tailor, and a 'handy ingenious... *Jack of all Trades*'.⁴⁶ Edward Eyre, a vicar's son, flattered himself that he was 'by no means a bad rough carpenter', and after killing and salting a bullock he used its fat to make his first 'mould candles'. He also 'baked bread in the form called a damper' and plaited a long rope from the hide of the bullock. 'Occasionally', he wrote, 'I cooked for all the party, at other times I left a man to do this and went to work with the axe and adze myself'.⁴⁷ In 1843, a young mechanical engineer recently 'released from a London apprenticeship' and 'fired by youthful and adventurous spirit' and the letters of his brother in Port Phillip, prepared to sail for Australia. In his written reminiscences in the 1890s, Alfred Joyce described it thus:

Coming to a colony that had only been settled six or seven years and purposing to enter a busy life, I felt I was going to be a sort of Robinson Crusoe, and as there was not likely to be a wrecked ship at hand to supply all our requirements, I took what I thought was a proper precaution and spent a good deal of money on every conceivable requirement of a bush-life.⁴⁸

Much earlier, Thomas More's brother-in-law, John Rastell, had attempted a settlement in the Americas, possibly inspired by More's imagined society to seek to create a real one. Such incidents and descriptions invite questions about 'the relationship between fiction and history, and myth and reality'; they raise the issue of the extent to which observation, and perhaps action, were influenced by received traditions and fantasy.⁴⁹ It is clear that *Robinson Crusoe* offered a narrative model of successful colonisation,

⁴⁵ Samuel Marsden to Mary Stokes, 3 December 1796, Letters from Marsden family to Mary and John Stokes; Letter 1 – 1821, George and Robert Dixon, Letters from Tasmania, ML, ML B425, CY 2408.

⁴⁶ Daniel Defoe, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, W Taylor, London, 1719, pp. 13-14; Anonymous diary by a servant of the Scott family, 8 Aug. 1821-Mar. 1824 (written after 1825), with notes, 1832, ML, MSS 7808, pp. 59-61.

⁴⁷ March 1834, Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1984 (1859), pp. 63-64.

⁴⁸ Alfred Joyce, *A Homestead History: Being the Reminiscences and Letters Alfred Joyce of Plaistow and Norwood, Port Phillip, 1834-1864*, Jacaranda Press, Brisbane, 1963 (1942), pp. 41-42.

⁴⁹ Arthur, *Virtual Voyages*, pp. 3, 10.

and it was the do-it-yourself aspects of the plot that appealed to so many men.⁵⁰ Many of Crusoe's activities in the early years on his island – surveying, building, planting, planning, recording the weather – could have come straight from the philosophical transactions of the Royal Society. This reflection of the spirit of early science resonated even more strongly by the end of the eighteenth century.⁵¹ As did Crusoe's individualism: historian Jonathan Rose explains that Defoe's novel 'showed what one workingman could do without landlords, clergymen, or capitalists... The impact of the parable lay in this: it collapsed all social distinctions into one person'.⁵² It is certainly arguable that the Crusoe story gave men across the social spectrum a shared reference point for their behaviour, giving men as disparate as barrister Edward Landor and ordinary seaman Benjamin Boyce a vocabulary with which to express their pursuit of independence.

The 'rovin commishon throo the world' that Boyce shared with Robinson Crusoe had 'independence' as its goal – certainly for Crusoe and, from what we can surmise from his limited words, for Boyce as well – whether it was expressed through the autonomy of restless adventure or through the cultivation of land or simply through Boyce mowing hay for himself instead of being 'ingaged' at a dairy.⁵³ The act of emigration itself required a 'convincing display of the manly attributes of 'self-reliance and perseverance' and settlement overseas was seen as the means of achieving the 'material and social prerequisites of a secure adult masculine status',⁵⁴ but settlement was bound up with notions of land ownership that were often difficult to realise in the colonies. It is this tension in the Crusoe story between rambling adventure and settled domestication through the cultivation of land that echoed most loudly in the published and unpublished writings of British men who attempted to reconcile their expectations with the material reality of the Australian colonies.

⁵⁰ Andrew Hassam, *Sailing to Australia. Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1994, pp. 83-84; Katherine Clark, *Daniel Defoe: The Whole Frame of Nature, Time and Providence*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2007, p. 114-115.

⁵¹ Ann Van Sant, 'Crusoe's Hands', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 32 (2), Spring, 2008, p. 128.

⁵² Rose, *Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, p. 111.

⁵³ Letter to mother, father and sisters, 'South Strialla', 22 July 1842, Eric Richards, 'A Voice From Below: Benjamin Boyce in South Australia, 1839-1846', *Labour History*, vol. (27), 1974, p. 65, 69.

⁵⁴ Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, p. 177.

Sole dominion over a morsel of land

Crusoe repeatedly worked his own land: on his plantation in Brazil, on his island home and on his Bedford farm back in Britain. 'I farm'd upon my own Land', said Crusoe as he described the particular pleasure of this type of independence, 'I had no Rent to pay, was limited by no Articles; I could pull up or cut down as I pleased. What I planted, was for myself, and what I improved, was for my Family'.⁵⁵ A popular poem of the 1830s repeated the sentiments:

The pride to rear an independent shed
And give to lips we love unborrowed bread;
To see the world from shadowy forest won,
In youthful beauty wedded to the sun;
To skirt our home with harvests widely sown,
And call the blooming landscape all our own;
Our children's heritage in prospect long;
These are the hopes, highminded hopes and strong,
That beckon England's wanderers o'er the brine
To realms where foreign constellations shine.⁵⁶

There was little argument over the benefits of owning land. As Thomas and Mary Topp admonished their daughter Jane Rose for her 'grumbling' and 'complaints' in 1798, 'consider what a fine thing land of your own is'. Jane's family, her husband Thomas Rose and their three children, were one of four families who were the first free and independent settlers to reach Sydney, in 1793.⁵⁷

Issues of dependence and independence framed various philanthropic proposals and attempts to reform the poor laws in Britain. A man with a small allotment of land was considered to be 'generally better behaved than those who [had] not that Interest in the Soil'.⁵⁸ The best suggestion, then, for 'ameliorating the state of the poor', 'Philanthropos' told the editor of *The Times*, 'will be to let them small farms at low

⁵⁵ Defoe, *Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, p. 7.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Catherine Hall, 'Imperial Man: Edward Eyre in Australasia and the West Indies, 1833-66', in Bill Schwarz (ed), *The Expansion of England: Race, Ethnicity and Cultural History*, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p. 130.

⁵⁷ Thomas Topp and Mary Topp, Letter to daughter, wife of Thomas Rose, ML, DOC 409, CY4588; Arthur McMartin, 'Rose, Thomas (1754?-1833)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020348b.htm>>, accessed 3/5/2007.

⁵⁸ Minutes of the Evidence taken before the Select Committee appointed to consider of the Poor Laws, Journals of the House of Lords, Appendices, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1830-1831, pp. 591-593.

rents'. This would give the 'satisfaction', said 'LM', 'of supplanting the lowly and piteous look and whine of the pauper by the nobler graces of manly and rational contentment'.⁵⁹ Schemes to make the poor independent by renting them decent cottages with gardens or allotments became increasingly common after 1815 when post-war unemployment and social dislocation made it ever more pressing that men be not only gainfully employed but committed to family and home.⁶⁰ The association of land with economic survival, comfort, and dignity appealed to both men of the lower classes in need of such support and the philanthropic men endeavouring to supply it. A cottage and an allotment of land might achieve 'the regeneration of the labouring class'.⁶¹

The same rhetoric of the regenerative potential of land was used for convicts. James Mario Matra's 1783 'Proposal for Establishing a Settlement in New South Wales' suggested that convicts with a few acres of land would quite probably become useful and moral subjects of society, and home secretary Lord Sydney for whom the town of Sydney was named, hoped that convicts would be the peasants of a country of their own.⁶² Accordingly, Arthur Phillip's first pronouncements to the convicts at Port Jackson assured them that the day of their transportation might be the happiest day they had seen, and he encouraged them to consider themselves as beginning anew.⁶³ When Judge Roger Therry reminisced about the Australian colonies of the 1830s and 40s he referred to the many convicts that 'had displayed the recuperative energy that is in man, by which though he sinks he but sinks to rise again'. Therry credited the 'easy acquisition of property by convicts on their becoming free, and the circumstance of becoming heads of families' with their success.⁶⁴ The rhetoric of regeneration was continued by Alexander Maconochie, the superintendent of the penal settlement on Norfolk Island in 1840. He, like James Mario Matra, Viscount Sydney, Arthur Phillip and

⁵⁹ *The Times*, 13 August 1817; *The Times*, Saturday 4 October 1817; see also *The Times*, 26 December 1818, 14 August 1819 and 30 January 1830.

⁶⁰ Sarah Lloyd, 'Poverty', in Iain McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 122.

⁶¹ Letter to the Editor from 'An Observer', *The Times*, 14 December 1830.

⁶² Mackaness, *Some Proposals for Establishing Colonies*, p.46; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 58.

⁶³ George B Worgan, *Journal of a First Fleet Surgeon*, Library Council of New South Wales in association with Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1788 (1978), p. 36; Daniel Southwell, Letters from D. Southwell, concerning New South Wales, 1787-1790, BL, MS ADD 16383, p. 43. (99).

⁶⁴ R Therry, *Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Residence in New South Wales and Victoria, etc*, 2nd edition, Sampson Low, London, 1863, pp. 57-59; Russel Ward and John Robertson (eds), *Such Was Life: Select Documents in Australian Social History 1788-1850*, Ure Smith, Sydney, 1969, p. 269.

other well-intentioned men before him, was 'in haste to lay out his new garden of Eden, or, rather like Prometheus, to commence his fabrication of a new man'.⁶⁵

From the earliest days, however, men held varying visions for how the colonies' 'wild' lands would actually be allocated and used. Though governor Lachlan Macquarie's long range plans, for example, included small allotments close to towns for self-sufficient farming by 'Sober, Industrious Men, with Small Families', as well as larger properties further from towns for men with capital to graze cattle and sheep, influential free settlers like Gregory Blaxland, William Charles Wentworth, William Lawson and William Cox were only interested in the latter.⁶⁶ Thus, the size of land grants and the conditions under which they were granted changed regularly and were eventually replaced by sale of land in 1831. Moreover, the allocation of land itself became a commercial venture with the establishment of ventures such as the Van Diemen's Land Company and the Australian Agricultural Company in the 1820s and the South Australian Association in the 1830s which sold granted lands to emigrants and used the proceeds to assist further emigrants.⁶⁷

The first grants of land in the Australian colonies were made in 1791 to members of the First Fleet: farmer turned convict superintendent Philip Schaffer received 140 acres, seamen Robert Webb and William Reid sixty each, and convict James Ruse thirty. Over the following months marines, sailors and convicts received land grants around Parramatta and on Norfolk Island. Soldiers too received land in freehold title from 1793.⁶⁸ Land grants continued over the following decade, with officers also distributing grants of a hundred acres to each other and some of the civil officials. In a deliberate effort to create a class of landowners and employers, Governor John Hunter gave grants of two to four hundred acres each, and of nearly 1000 in one instance. His successor Philip Gidley King continued this policy with parcels of sixty to two hundred acres suitable for small farmers and five hundred to fifteen hundred to gentlemen, sometimes with government livestock, in the hope that farmers would become

⁶⁵ 'What is to be done with our Criminals?' *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 86 (173), July, 1847, p. 238.

⁶⁶ Waterhouse, 'The Vision Splendid', p. 23.

⁶⁷ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 2*, p. 95; Van Diemens Land Company. Return to an address of the Honourable House of Commons, dated 10th May 1825;--for, minutes of the intended arrangements between Earl Bathurst, His Majesty's Secretary of State, and the proposed Van Diemens Land Company, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1825 (303), p. 95.

⁶⁸ Extracts from Arthur Phillip's journal, John Hunter, *An Historical Journal of Events at Sydney and at Sea 1787-1792*, Angus & Robertson in association with the Royal Australian Historical Society, Sydney, 1793 (1968), pp. 351, 363-365; 'Schaffer, Philip (-1828?)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020377b.htm>>, accessed 16/4/2010; Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, pp. 203-204.

relatively wealthy. Emancipated convicts continued to receive land grants, along with farming tools, seed, grain, cattle, sheep and hogs.⁶⁹

These grants were conditional and conditions changed over time. Land grants were originally free of taxes provided the receiver resided on their land and cultivated and improved it.⁷⁰ By 1830 they were subject to a 'quit-rent' after seven years during which time the settler was expected to spend at least a quarter of the land's value on improvements or forfeit it to the Crown.⁷¹ Exponential growth of land grants between 1819 and 1828 indicated that these conditions were acceptable,⁷² but as Viscount Goderich complained to governor Ralph Darling in New South Wales in 1831, it had 'not had the intended effect of preventing large tracts of land from being appropriated by persons unable to improve and cultivate them'.⁷³ Land sales, Goderich told Governor James Stirling in Western Australia, would achieve this and render conditions unnecessary as '[n]o man will pay for land of which it is not his intention really to make use'.⁷⁴

Changing government policy in availability and price of land produced as much discord as it did independent and self-sufficient settlers.⁷⁵ Criticisms of the land grant system included accusations of favouritism and corruption, scattered settlement, and lack of revenue raising for government needs.⁷⁶ Problems ranged from disappointment in delays over allocation to disputes over prior occupation of granted land and the sorts of complications that being caught up in changing conditions created. This was the case for the Forlong family who made their plans and preparations for emigration based on

⁶⁹ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, p. 218; Philip Gidley King Instructions, King Family Papers, ML, A1976.

⁷⁰ Philip Gidley King Instructions.

⁷¹ Colonial grants. Copy of the conditions under which lands are granted in the British North American colonies, and in the colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1830 (351), p. 4.

⁷² Janet Doust, *English Migrants to Eastern Australia 1815-1860*, PhD Thesis, The Australian National University, 2004, p. 60.

⁷³ Viscount Goderich to Lieutenant-General Darling, 9 January 1831, Abstract of the answers and returns made pursuant to an act, passed in the fifty-first year of His Majesty King George III, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1812 (316), p. 6.

⁷⁴ Viscount Goderich to Governor Stirling, 28 April 1831, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1812 (316), p. 30.

⁷⁵ Doust, *English Migrants*, pp. 92-93.

⁷⁶ Eric Richards, 'Emigration to the New Worlds: Migration Systems in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. (41), 1995, p. 399.

the Land Regulations of 1827, only to find themselves in difficulties when those regulations were abolished in 1831.⁷⁷

Despite such obstacles, it was difficult to shift the notion that labouring on the land was morally superior and capable of bestowing a qualitatively different level of happiness than pursuing independence in trade or urban professions. Edward Gittins Bucknall's mother's family owned woolen mills and the men of his father's family, at least as far back as his grandfather, had been trained in crafts or commerce and achieved a good standard of education. Yet Bucknall's two eldest sons were 'opposed to any business other than farming', and prospects in farming in Britain were 'very gloomy', wrote Bucknall. His motives for emigrating were, therefore, 'purely for the welfare of the children'. 'I do not wish to see my children rich', he explained to his brother Stephen, already in America, 'but I do wish to see them able to procure the comforts and conveniences of life without the bickerings, heart burnings and distressing anxieties which seem to be the inseparable attendant of trade here'.⁷⁸

Bucknall's sons were expressing what many saw to be man's natural desire to 'acquire the sole dominion over a morsel of land', as 'the satisfaction of a passion: of his craving for what, from father to son, has been regarded by his race as their ideal good'. This is what Herman Merivale, professor of political economy at Oxford contended in his 1839 lectures on colonisation. He went on to say that it was 'easy to conceive' how this 'tendency' would be played out when a man was 'suddenly transferred from his narrow sphere of action at home to the liberty of a new country: '[h]is first impulse' would be 'to separate from his brethren, to plunge into the wilderness, to erect his own domestic monarchy apart from all others'.⁷⁹ To be monarch of all he surveyed, perhaps.⁸⁰ The publication of Merivale's lectures led to his appointment as assistant under-secretary of state for the colonies, and in 1848 he succeeded Sir James Stephen as permanent under-secretary.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Backhouse, *Narrative of A Visit*, p. 510; William Hilton Hovell Papers, 1811-1921, ML, Safe 1/32a-h, CY 1522; Van Diemen's Land. Copies of papers relative to the claim of William and Andrew Forlong in Van Diemen's Land, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1837-38 (61).

⁷⁸ Graeme Bucknall and Lorna McDonald (eds), *Letters of an Australian Pioneer Family 1827-1880: The Generation of Gittins and Sarah Bucknall 1797-1880*, The Association of the Bucknall Family, Victoria, 1984, pp. 2-4, 54.

⁷⁹ Herman Merivale, *Introduction to A Course of Lectures on Colonization and Colonies Begun in March, 1839*, Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans, London, 1841, p. 24.

⁸⁰ William Cowper, *Poems*, New, Phillips, Sampson, & Co, Boston, 1850, p. 178.

⁸¹ Leslie Stephen, 'Merivale, Herman (1806-1874)', rev. Donovan Williams, ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/18593>>, accessed 28/3/2010.

Land was an increasingly rare source of income for men in a commercialising, industrialising Britain, but even in the early days of the Australian colonies most free settlers, convicts and ex-convicts congregated around quickly growing settlements where the financial opportunities on offer sat uneasily with perceived threats to men's physical and moral health. Defoe had struggled to reconcile his strong belief in commerce as the key to society's moral and material advancement with the realities of consumption and credit's potential to corrupt.⁸² In towns and cities that potential was brought to the fore, so that when a young tradesman stepped out of his shop into Exchange Alley, Defoe warned, 'tis ten Thousand to one but he is undone'.⁸³ The new prospects for men in the world of commerce, manufacturing and the professions could be enticing.⁸⁴ For every man like Edward Spain who would have been happy to never see London again after his first visit, or Absalom Watkin who, even after forty-one years, hated business, there was a William Hutton who found a 'vivacity' in the people of Birmingham that he had never seen before. Men like Josiah Conder equivocated: though he welcomed the 'discipline of mind' necessary for business, he knew he needed to be careful about his excessive 'love for the world, in the form of refined luxury'. Tellingly, JJ Macintyre, who found the city's 'dangers' and 'temptations' exhilarating, equated his experience to adventure. 'Life in London', he wrote, 'is similar to life in the great American or African, or Arabian deserts – namely the sense of freedom – and the dependence on self in meeting its tricks and dangers'.⁸⁵

Money-making itself was perceived ambivalently: described as 'ignoble' by journals such as *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* earlier in the eighteenth century, it was still greeted with suspicion into the nineteenth century. Men were especially anxious about the increasing reliance on credit which to many minds was an unsatisfactory substitute for real property.⁸⁶ Some sort of social disintegration did appear to be underway when

⁸² Clark, *Daniel Defoe*, pp. 2-3, 139, 140-141.

⁸³ Daniel Defoe, *The Anatomy of Exchange Alley*, 1719, in John Francis, *Chronicles and Characters of the Stock Exchange*, 1st American edition, WM Crosby and HP Nichols, Boston, 1850, p. 150; Clark, *Daniel Defoe*, p. 147.

⁸⁴ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, Routledge, London, 2002, p. xv.

⁸⁵ Edward Spain, *Reminiscences, 1774-1802*, ML, C266, CY 1403; Magdalen Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993, p. 275; William Hutton, *The Life of William Hutton*, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, London, 1816, pp. 41-42; Eustace R Conder, *Josiah Conder. A Memoir*, John Snow, London, 1857, pp. 114-115; JJ Macintyre Papers Vol I, BL, MS ADD 41742, L164, 173, 180.

⁸⁶ GJ Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992, p. 88; Hall, 'Imperial Man', p. 134; JGA Pocock, 'Early Modern Capitalism — The Augustan Perception', in Eugene Kamenka and RS Neale (eds), *Feudalism, Capitalism and Beyond*, Edward Arnold, London, 1975, pp. 62-84.

successful money-making made no class distinctions and gave men of 'low origin' an 'easy indifference' with their betters, as exemplified by a successful publican reprimanded by the Hobart Town magistrate who simply jingled his pocket half-filled with silver as if to say 'you may talk – but I can buy up the whole of you'.⁸⁷

There was no getting away from the necessity of money. It was insurance against the uncertainties of life. In failing health and concerned that he would not be able to continue his employment, Sussex excise officer William Hall found comfort in calculating how much money he would have once all his debts were paid.⁸⁸ And money was the means for getting on in the world. 'It is indeed a great misfortune to want a little money', Matthew Flinders wrote to his father, 'I feel as if I could accomplish anything if this want was not continually dragging at me'. Flinders thought this 'continual want' was a 'dangerous thing to a young man's morals', yet not all ways of making money were acceptable to ambitious men. Edward Eyre, for one, shrank from entering a merchant's office.⁸⁹ Men that did, often found it difficult to maintain a stable and robust sense of manliness when they aligned their reputations and value as men with the precarious vagaries of commerce. In such an environment, a business reversal could see a merchant 'wholly unmanned' as one young man in Philadelphia, America, described.⁹⁰

Commerce, however, was a feature of the Australian colonies within a decade of the arrival of the First Fleet. While the naval and military officers built up livestock and landed property, the non-commissioned officers established themselves as traders, to the extent that, at one time, one-third of Sydney publicans were non-commissioned officers. There was no restriction, at this time, on the property that transported convicts could take with them, so some had the means to set up in trade after their arrival. By the early 1790s former convicts were using convict labour and a handful, like retailer, auctioneer, sealer, pastoralist, timber merchant and manufacturer Simeon Lord, quickly became the principle managers of capital in Sydney.⁹¹ When surgeon John Washington Price arrived in Sydney that year he was sufficiently impressed to

⁸⁷ Henry Savery, *The Hermit in Van Diemen's Land*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1964 (1829), p. 128.

⁸⁸ William Hall Archives, WSRO, ADD MSS 39854-858.

⁸⁹ Flinders to Matthew Flinders, Senior, 28 February 1801, in Paul Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders: Personal Letters from An Extraordinary Life*, Hordern House in association with the Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002, p. 61; Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative*, p. 33.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Toby L Ditz, 'Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia', *The Journal of American History*, vol. 81 (1), June, 1994, p. 51.

⁹¹ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, p. 277, 208-210; DR Hainsworth, 'Lord, Simeon (1771-1840)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020114b.htm>>, accessed 1/4/2010.

describe the town as 'The Metropolis of a future Empire'. Such optimism was also found in the *Sydney Gazette* where the editor contemplated the 'peculiar pleasure' of witnessing the 'polishing and improving' of these 'remote parts of the habitable world' which might have remained 'a wild and ruthless waste'.⁹²

By the 1840s when men with 'speculation in their eyes' walked the streets of Sydney, Australia was heavily urbanised in comparison to Britain and America (though that picture needs to be qualified by the size of the urban environments as people could still shoot game within three or four miles of the Sydney general post office).⁹³ For commentators like Edward Gibbon Wakefield it was this 'concentration' of population that was necessary for the emergence of 'civilization', and alongside notions that cities and crowds were a source of contamination and decay there also existed, especially in facing Australia's vast open spaces, a feeling that it was isolation and the absence of society that would make men wicked.⁹⁴ Throughout the period of this study, however, the lure of land was strong, with its potential for autonomy of action and healthy labour arguably as significant as any promise of financial security. Although a commercialising and industrialising economy opened up new financial opportunities, from secure ongoing employment to ventures in trade, men were not wholly persuaded if the opportunities threatened independence, '[t]he greatest of all human benefits... without which no other benefit can be truly enjoyed'.⁹⁵ Captain Collet Barker summarised the pervasive feeling of his time when he wrote that those who conceived of independence as 'the accumulation of money' mistook the meaning of the word as it was used in the colonies. New South Wales, he wrote, was not a place to 'realize a fortune', rather the happiness of the settler was in finding the situation described by poet Alexander Pope: 'Happy the man whose wish & care, A few paternal acres bound'.⁹⁶ He underlined the word 'independence' each time he used it in this statement.

⁹² Price, Journal, pp. 78, 82; *Sydney Gazette*, 10 April 1803.

⁹³ Henry William Haygarth, *Recollections of Bush Life in Australia*, John Murray, London, 1848, p. 158; Ward and Robertson (eds), *Such Was Life*, p. 253.

⁹⁴ MF Lloyd Prichard (ed), *The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, Collins, Glasgow and London, 1968, p. 134; Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 2*, p. 217.

⁹⁵ William Godwin, *The Enquirer. Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature. In A Series Of Essays*, Robert Campbell & Co, Philadelphia, 1797, p. 194.

⁹⁶ John Mulvaney and Neville Green (eds), *Commandant of Solitude: The Journals of Captain Collet Barker 1828-1831*, Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 1992, p. 407. Quote is the first stanza of Alexander Pope's *Ode on Solitude*.

Strong minds and tough sinews

The men that could not fail to become 'independent', according to the emigration literature, newspaper commentary and parliamentary reports, were the 'sober and industrious' ones.⁹⁷ The pervasive phrase obscured the actuality that settlers until 1830 were most likely to be emancipated convicts or assisted paupers – both groups usually associated with dissipation and idleness. It also undermined the view that an allotment of land would 'improve' men: 'sober and industrious men' were not, after all, in need of improvement. Thus there were mixed messages in the emigration literature, parliamentary committee reports on emigration and transportation, and among various commentators: while the colonies were promoted as recuperating less than manly men, the men with the best chance for success were said to be those already with the attainments of successful manhood in physical strength, family, and financial capital.

Emigration was recommended for the inactive and unsuccessful, those 'wasting their manhood in unprofitable labour, or hopeless idleness!', yet authors acknowledged that skills, experience, and a willingness to work were actually necessary.⁹⁸ While they said that well-paid employment was readily available to those with farm skills they also conceded that 'mechanics' of all description (carpenters, masons, stone-cutters, bricklayers, shoemakers, tailors, sawyers) were in demand.⁹⁹ Although some authors thought women and children were an encumbrance, it was young, married men, who were given the best chance of success.¹⁰⁰ Clerical skills, however, were not required. Apart from lack of employment opportunities, such men were thought to lack the necessary robust physical constitution. One author thought it 'absurd and preposterous' that these men 'who never had a spade in their hands... talk of becoming farmers of a hundred acres'. It would take men with 'strong minds and tough sinews' to undertake the 'exposure and privations' of an 'active pastoral' life. Men without these virtues but with 'money (if they have plenty of it) may surmount the difficulties, but their personal

⁹⁷ For example, *South Australia Gazette* quoted in T Horton James, *Six Months in Australia*, J. Cross, London, 1838, p. 260.

⁹⁸ Anon, *A Voice From The Bush*, pp. 26-27; Marjoribanks, *Travels in New South Wales*, p. 244.

⁹⁹ Samuel Butler, *The Hand-Book for Australian Emigrants; being a descriptive history of Australia, and containing an account of the climate, soil and natural productions of New South Wales, South Australia, and Swan River Settlement, etc*, 9th edition, W R M'Phun, Glasgow, 1839, p. 94; Anon, *A Voice From The Bush*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁰ A Friend to Truth, *A True Picture of Australia, Its Merits and Demerits*, John Morrison, John M'Leod, Glasgow, 1839, p. 42; Anon, *A Voice From The Bush*, p. 31.

exertions never will'.¹⁰¹ Promotional literature unanimously agreed on the benefits of financial 'means'. The best prospects in the Australian colonies lay in wait for 'the man of capital', 'respectable families of moderate capital', 'men of small means accustomed to pastoral or agricultural pursuits', and retired military officers or those on half-pay.¹⁰²

Governor Arthur Phillip, convinced of the necessity of settlers and 'desirous' to secure their success, presumed that the first settlers would be good farmers.¹⁰³ Yet commentators in Britain like magistrate Patrick Colquhoun, advocated emigration as one of the 'positive remedies for the prevention of crimes' that were the result of 'surplus population' and this population was more likely to be urban than rural where farm skills were in short supply. Men like Thomas Potter Macqueen, a member of parliament who owned rural property in New South Wales but had never been to the colony, believed 'nine-tenths of the common crime' arose from poverty and that transportation should be a form of emigration, and Henry Moreton Dyer, 'an experienced Magistrate of the Public Office, at Marlborough-street', advocated a 'system of voluntary emigration' for first-time offenders to remove them from 'the scenes of their perpetually repeated guilt'. But Alexander Riley, one of the colony's first settlers complained to a select committee in 1819 that men without 'the power to render themselves useful on a farm', were not desired.¹⁰⁴

Tension between the types of men that British authorities and commentators wished to send to the colonies and the types of men the authorities and settlers in the colonies wished to receive was ongoing. Emigrants without capital would 'certainly fail', as Lieutenant-colonel William Sorrell, former governor of Van Diemen's Land, told the select committee on emigration in 1826. Pauper emigrants would need assistance to become settlers along similar lines to that given to emancipated convicts 'who became

¹⁰¹ Anon, *A Voice From The Bush*; p. 28; Butler, *Hand-Book for Australian Emigrants*, pp. 94, 107-108; JC Byrne, *Twelve Year's Wanderings in the British Colonies. From 1835 to 1847. Vol 1*, Richard Bentley, London, 1848, p. 9; Truth, *A True Picture of Australia*, p. 42, 46.

¹⁰² Byrne, *Twelve Year's Wanderings*, pp. 286-289; Butler, *Hand-Book for Australian Emigrants*, pp. 98, 108-109.

¹⁰³ Governor Phillip to Secretary Grenville, Sydney Cove, 17th June 1790, General Index to the Journals of the House of Commons, Volume XXXV, A.D. 1774 - Volume LV, A.D. 1800, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, p. 21.

¹⁰⁴ Report from the Committee on the State of the Police of the Metropolis; with, the minutes of evidence taken before the committee; and, an appendix of sundry papers, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1816 (510), p. 33; Ruth Paley, 'Colquhoun, Patrick (1745-1820)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/5992>>, accessed 12 April 2010; Report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1826 (404), pp. 92, 96, 172; Evidence of Alexander Riley, Report from the Select Committee on the State of Gaols, &c, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1819 (585), p. 13.

settlers by the creation of the government'.¹⁰⁵ Another option was to encourage the emigration of men with their own capital, yet the third report from the selection committee in emigration in 1827 questioned the benefits to 'the mother Country' if she lost her 'small capitalists'. This report felt it would be more viable to send out Britain's 'unemployed, able-bodied agricultural paupers', and rely on 'the independence which an indefinite supply of fertile land provides for the labourers', which 'after a few years of exertion' would 'transmute all such labourers into colonists' and 'create fresh demands for labour from the population of the mother Country'.¹⁰⁶

Edward Gibbon Wakefield recognised this propensity for labourers to become colonists, that is land-owners requiring further labour, invariably led to labour shortages. In 1836 Wakefield advised a parliamentary committee that the price of land be made sufficiently high to discourage men from immediately acting on their 'desire to become land-owners': in having to work for a couple of years to raise the money for land purchase, they would provide necessary labour for hire. This committee's report believed the interests of Britain and its colonies were 'inseparable;— the one thing wanting in the Colonies, being precisely that free, or hired, labour, a superabundant supply of which is occasioning great local suffering in other parts of the Empire'.¹⁰⁷ Certainly the *Colonial Times* voiced the frustration of settlers at being unable to 'reap' what they had 'sown', their 'ploughs and bullocks... standing idle for want of men'.¹⁰⁸

As early as 1795, the Reverend Samuel Marsden in Sydney wished 'we had some thousands of the poor English families here'.¹⁰⁹ There were many like-minded people in Britain. Politician Robert John Wilmot-Horton saw emigration as the main answer to the challenges of poverty and over-population and issues of political economy. He was an obsessive advocate during the 1820s. In the late 1840s commentator Thomas Carlyle was similarly passionate about emigration as a solution for the 'millions of Working Men imprisoned in "Impossibility" and Poor-Law Bastilles'. On the other hand, commentator William Cobbett thought it 'a sin of all sins' that honest English labourers should 'be reduced to such misery as to be induced to abandon their homes and their country, to seek, in a foreign land, the means of preventing themselves and their

¹⁰⁵ Report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1826 (404), p. 105.

¹⁰⁶ Third report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1826-27 (550), pp. 36-37.

¹⁰⁷ Report from the Select Committee on the Disposal of Lands in the British Colonies; together with the minutes of evidence, and appendix, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1836 (512), pp. v, 57-58.

¹⁰⁸ *Colonial Times*, 12 June 1829.

¹⁰⁹ Letters from Marsden family to Mary and John Stokes, [29].

children from starving'. Cobbett thought emigration would benefit the middling sort, those in trade, farming and manufacture suffering under oppressive taxation. He wrote his *Emigrant's Guide* for them in 1829.¹¹⁰

Meanwhile, it was not unanimously accepted that emigration from Ireland had actually reduced that country's population,¹¹¹ and the belief that emigration might weaken the British nation continued into the nineteenth century. That population numbers had declined since ancient times was a view that persisted despite an actual population expansion, and while population was equated with power and wealth, each emigrant could be viewed as a further loss of national strength.¹¹² Yet, rumours in 1801 and 1802 that the government would allow free emigrants to Australia elicited a stream of enquiries and a trickle of movement by men who were offered free passage for themselves and their families, a large grant of land, and convict labourers who would be fed and clothed by the government for eighteen months. By the early 1840s, this trickle was an overwhelming tide of assisted and unassisted emigrants.¹¹³

The criteria and eligibility for assisted emigration, covering skills, age, and family composition, varied over time to accommodate the perceived needs of the Australian colonies, but moral character and physical health – sobriety and industriousness – remained essential.¹¹⁴ The physical requirements presented both an anomaly and an obstacle: an anomaly in that a few year's of bush life was recommended as recuperative for the inactive and unsuccessful, yet the hardship of that bush life required an existing level of fitness; an obstacle in that Britain's redundant population, the unemployed weavers, spinners and shoemakers, were not necessarily robust

¹¹⁰ Eric Richards, 'Horton, Sir Robert John Wilmot-, third baronet (1784–1841)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/13827>>, accessed 24/3/2010; Carlyle, *Past and Present and Chartism*, pp. 252, 336, 375; William Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, Henry Frowde, London, 1906 (1829), p. 101; William Cobbett, *The Emigrant's Guide; in Ten Letters, Addressed To The Tax-Payers of England; Containing Information Of Every Kind, Necessary To Persons Who Are About To Emigrate*, Mills, Jowett, and Mills, London, 1829, p. 29; HJM Johnston, *British Emigration Policy 1815-1830: 'Shovelling out Paupers'*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972, p. 130.

¹¹¹ Second report of evidence from the Select Committee on the State of the Poor in Ireland, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1830 (654) III.

¹¹² Johnston, *British Emigration Policy*; Richard A Soloway, *Demography and Degeneration: Eugenics and the Declining Birthrate in Twentieth-Century Britain*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1990, p. 60.

¹¹³ Manning Clark, *A History of Australia, Vol 1: From the Earliest Times to the Age of Macquarie*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1999 (1962), pp. 203-204; Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, pp. 216-217; Therry, *Reminiscences*, p. 417; Colonial grants. Copy of the conditions under which lands are granted in the British North American colonies, and in the colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1830 (351).

¹¹⁴ For example, criteria and rule of free passage outlined in 1839 by John Marshall, Australian Emigration Agent quoted in Anon, *Twenty Years Experience*, p. 61.

enough to fell heavy wood, stump up roots and clear land.¹¹⁵ Yet, despite evidence to a select committee in 1819 that 'small settlers' were 'very badly off', all manner of men continued to be portrayed as having in common a very strong 'motive', as Edward Gibbon Wakefield described it, for obtaining land, and not just a small piece, but 'something like a farm', from which they would physically and morally benefit.¹¹⁶

If I can't do well in one place, I go to another

As men in Britain and the Australian colonies pragmatically adapted to changing circumstances they clung to, and perpetuated, the seemingly essential relationship between men and land in the pursuit of independence. They reconciled their 'ardent desire for dirt' with the need for income in many ways but the result was often peripatetic.¹¹⁷ Although changes in agricultural practice made it more like manufacturing, farming was still carried on with other activities. In Britain, shopkeepers in market towns grew much of their own produce, small farms were often combined with another business – public house, brick kiln, blacksmithy or pottery for instance – and clergymen and doctors farmed to subsidise their incomes, while attorneys, surveyors and estate agents were often substantial farmers as well.¹¹⁸

The officers of the First Fleet to New South Wales took as much live stock as they could find room for, 'not merely', wrote Captain John Hunter, 'for the purpose of living upon during the passage, but with a view of stocking their little farms in the country to which we were going'.¹¹⁹ The missionary Lancelot Edward Threlkeld cleared and cultivated his own land to provide for his family of nine children, and farmer's son and wool stapler George Hawke worked as superintendent on the Reverend Thomas Hassall's farm until he earned enough to purchase land of his own from which he sold milk and cheese and later raised sheep. Even then he supported his farm income with time in a saddlery business in Sydney and later used his wool profits to make further

¹¹⁵ Third report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1826-27 (550), p. 106.

¹¹⁶ Evidence of Richard Jones, Report from the Select Committee on the State of Gaols, &c, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1819 (585), p. 138; Minutes of Evidence, Edward Gibbon Wakefield examined, Report from the Select Committee on the Disposal of Lands in the British Colonies; together with the minutes of evidence, and appendix, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1836 (512), p. 65.

¹¹⁷ Hutton, *The Life*, p. 108; CR Elrington, 'Hutton, William (1723–1815)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/14317>>, accessed 18/4/2010.

¹¹⁸ Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 254.

¹¹⁹ Hunter, *Historical Journal*, p. 21.

profits as owner of a couple of general stores.¹²⁰ Much of this restlessness was financially necessary and men had to be prepared to adapt to circumstances, as George Mann did. '[A] person can do so very well in this country if he minds himself', he wrote to his parents in 1827, 'money seems at present rather shy but Trade is middling brisk... following the carpentering for i find it much better than farming wheat'.¹²¹ Changeable circumstances made men like Robert Hoddle anxious and uncertain, but others, like Benjamin Boyce, took it in their stride. '[T]here is no fear of me doing well sum whear', he wrote to his family, 'for if A cant do well in our place then i go to a nother'.¹²²

More prosperous men in the middling classes who found the briskness of trade tied them to towns and cities dreamed of retirement to the country. In this they were strongly influenced by the popular poet William Cowper, the creator of Alexander Selkirk's/Robinson Crusoe's immortal line, 'I am monarch of all I survey'. The 'real man' for Cowper was the one released from anxious thoughts on how to increase wealth, living a quiet domestic rural life rather than the agitated and anxious world of town and commerce. For increasing numbers of men in Britain, their suburban gardens would be the closest they would get to this contemplative rural existence, but some realised the dream.¹²³ William Hutton, the son of a Derbyshire wool comber, claimed that his desire for dirt was with him from the age of eight. He bought his first land in 1766 after making money in paper manufacturing. In 1769 he built the country home outside Birmingham to which he finally retired and subsequently died in 1815.¹²⁴ Literary scholar David Blewett describes this 'retirement myth' as an idea celebrated by Roman writers and revived in England in the seventeenth century. The enduring appeal of this vision of rural contentment was not simply the opportunity for religious contemplation as Cowper would have it, but for man's liberty, the freedom to work his own land and live by his own laws.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Backhouse, *Narrative of A Visit*, p. 381; George Hawke, Journal of an early Cornish settler in NSW, ML, A1938 CY1156.

¹²¹ 26 February 1827, George Mann, Letter to parents, Miscellaneous letters and papers, BL, ADD MS 62943, original spelling retained.

¹²² Robert Hoddle, Diary, SLVA, H12032, Box 53/2 (a) & (b), p. 89; Boyce quoted in Richards, 'A Voice From Below', p. 71, original spelling retained.

¹²³ Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 164, 166.

¹²⁴ Hutton, *The Life*, p. 108; CR Elrington, 'Hutton, William (1723–1815)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/14317>>, accessed 18 April 2010.

¹²⁵ David Blewett, 'The Retirement Myth in *Robinson Crusoe*: A Reconsideration', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, vol. 15 (2), Fall, 1982, pp. 37, 39, 41.

Numbers of men in trade in the Australia colonies clung to the idea of retiring to a farm in Britain where they could begin 'that fabled compromise between exercise and profitable occupation which the life of an English gentleman-farmer is popularly supposed to furnish'.¹²⁶ They also looked for rural retreats in their new home. A successful general merchant in Sydney such as Richard Jones might have pastoral interests and for many, like Jones, their hearts were in their rural ventures. During the 1830s Jones repeatedly said that he wished to clear himself of his mercantile activities and devote himself entirely to his sheep.¹²⁷ Pastoral pursuits not only 'necessitate[d] an active, independent mode of life', wrote Henry William Haygarth, they also provided opportunities to combine business with pleasure'.¹²⁸ Men taking up these opportunities could look the true business man in their tandems 'in George-street, Sydney' but, like one Mr Ebden, appear in the country 'with a fur skin jacket and cap, his beard long, exactly a facsimile of the pictures we see of Robinson Crusoe'.¹²⁹

Many men, like Hoddle, equivocated about their choice to pursue independence on the land. A man could fret to be beyond society but delay his expedition on the promise of 'the company of ladies'. Another could be enjoy his position in the post-office, but still hold 'a longing for the bush', even in the full knowledge that success in such a venture might mean 'seven years of exertion and privation'.¹³⁰ Arthur Pooley Onslow could write in the same letter of both his delight in settling and his distaste for the 'privations of a settler's life'.¹³¹ But others, like David Waugh, would not change their circumstances, 'rough & solitary as they are', because they could anticipate a farm of their own. Attempts to settle, it seems, could be unsettling.

British men's struggles to reconcile dichotomies – of nature and society, of authentic primitiveness and artificial civilisation, of being adventurous and being settled, of satisfying their ardent desire for dirt in the face of circumstances and policies that made land ownership difficult – were especially evident in representations of Aboriginal men's nomadic habits which were arguably as much a reflection of anxieties over their own behaviour as any observed behaviour in so called 'native' men. Travel accounts,

¹²⁶ 'My family chronical' Thomas Alexander Browne, *Our family chronicle/My Autobiography* by "Rolf Boldrewood", ML, A2132, CY705.

¹²⁷ D Shineberg, 'Jones, Richard (1786-1852)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020023b.htm>>, accessed 16/4/2010.

¹²⁸ Haygarth, *Recollections*, pp. 3, 117.

¹²⁹ Anon, *A Month in the Bush of Australia*, J Cross; Simpkin and Marshall, London, 1838, p. 35.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 10, 14, 18.

¹³¹ Arthur Pooley Onslow to James Street Sydney, 17 August 1828, John Street, Letters received 1822-1846, ML, A3013/A3014, CY1572.

novels, children's stories, pantomimes, slavery debates and the experiences in British colonies in north America and Africa, had introduced various ideas of indigenous peoples to British audiences.¹³² British men's encounters with the Indigenous peoples of the great southern continent were thus shaped by what they had read and heard, and among those influences was *Robinson Crusoe*. The implications of Defoe's novel on slavery, colonial relationships with indigenous people, and the articulation of race have been well-covered but there is a less-examined aspect of Crusoe's relationship with Friday that was played out in men's accounts of certain relationships with Indigenous Australians.¹³³

Defoe was a critic of the ideology of blood and birth that gave rise to discrimination and he extended this to other races in Crusoe's acknowledgement that even cannibals were men similar to him who lacked opportunity to express their innate goodness because they did not have the knowledge and instruction of God's word.¹³⁴ Despite this, Crusoe considered the groups of natives that he met to be beyond his capacity to save. On the other hand, an individual cannibal, his 'man Friday', could be 'my slave', 'my servant', and thus capable of being brought into the light of God's word. Moreover, Friday could also be 'my friend'.¹³⁵ Like Crusoe, British men appeared capable of holding seemingly contradictory perceptions of Indigenous people as a group to those of particular individuals. Thus the tribe met by a 'Party of Gentlemen' travelling from Sydney to Port Phillip were seen to be 'lazy' and of 'no use' while they were complimentary about the man, who like Friday accompanying Crusoe on all his 'ramblings', was with them on their journey, 'Our black native Bretha'.¹³⁶ Similarly, brothers Robert and Helenus Scott, on the trip out to their new grants of land on the Hunter River, were accompanied by a 'native black man and woman' with the names Bungaree and Carawoolgal. A white servant on this expedition described them both as 'very useful', and 'Bungaree was a very interesting fellow'. His description of Bungaree's surprised reaction to kangaroos being killed with guns sounds very similar to Friday's amazement when Crusoe first shoots a goat in his presence. When

¹³² Greg Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 269-276.

¹³³ For example, Derek Cohen, 'Fashioning Friday', *Queen's Quarterly*, vol. 115 (1), 2008, pp. 9-19; Gary Gautier, 'Slavery and the Fashioning of Race in *Oroonoko*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and Equiano's Life', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, vol. 42 (2), Summer, 2001, pp. 161-180; Gerald Gillespie, 'In Search of the Noble Savage: Some Romantic Cases', *Neohelicon*, vol. XXIX (1), 2002, pp. 89-95.

¹³⁴ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 212.

¹³⁵ Gautier, 'Slavery and the Fashioning of Race', pp. 166, 169.

¹³⁶ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 354; Anon, *A Month in the Bush*, pp. 19, 30.

Bungaree would travel no further with them, 'a little black boy came to us from out of the woods' who said his name was Ben Davis and he would travel with them, which they were 'very glad of'. At one point Ben Davis and one of the Scotts 'went across the Plains a shooting', while the servant made 'very good friends' with a native called Mytie.¹³⁷

Perhaps even more common than reports of settlers travelling 'in Company with black fellows', were accounts of individual Indigenous people's assistance to explorers.¹³⁸ Hamilton Hume was accompanied by 'a black boy, a native of Appin', when he explored the country around what is now known as Berrima in New South Wales. And Edward Eyre took 'two little black boys about eight years old' who Eyre described as 'hardy as well as full of life and spirits... very active and useful, especially in tracking lost animals'.¹³⁹ Many of these white men wandering the bush, 'that wonderland of mystery, fear and perilous adventure', agreed with ship's surgeon Peter Cunningham on the irresistible captivation of a wild roaming life, a life that once tasted would make it difficult for a man to relish civilised society again.¹⁴⁰ But Cunningham was writing about the 'Aborigines'.

It is not surprising then to find that film theorist Stephan Papson concludes that the term 'walkabout' is 'a non-Indigenous construction of both real and imagined Indigenous practices'. Etymologically vague, 'walkabout' plays a prominent role in representing Indigenous peoples in Australian cinema, but, as Papson explains, it is used to express different things at different times: it might be an uncontrollable psychological drive to go into the wilderness; a break from the routines of a non-indigenous work ethic; a romanticised relationship to deeper meanings of Aboriginal tradition; a desire for those traditions to not be overwhelmed by Western culture; the antithesis of a maternal desire for care and family stability; or an escape from the pressures of a highly bureaucratised capitalist world. In actuality, Indigenous peoples on 'walkabout' were more likely to be family groups than single men – the lone men

¹³⁷ Anonymous diary by a servant of the Scott family, pp. 18, 19, 22, 28, 53-54, 57-58; Nancy Gray, 'Scott, Robert (1799?-1844)', ADB, <<http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020386b.htm>>, accessed 21/3/2010; Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 266.

¹³⁸ 2 March 1830, Charles Boyde, Journal; on the 'vital role' that the Aboriginal guide played in exploration, see Henry Reynolds, *With the White People: The Crucial Role of Aborigines in the Exploration and Development of Australia*, Penguin, Melbourne, 1990, p. 17.

¹³⁹ Hovell, William Hilton Hovell Papers, 1811-1921, pp. 3-4; Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative*, p. 105.

¹⁴⁰ Browne, *Our family chronicle/My Autobiography*, p. 33; Peter Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales; A Series of Letters, comprising Sketches of the Actual State of Society in That Colony; Of its Peculiar Advantages to Emigrants; Of its Topography, Natural History, &c. &c.*, vol. 2, Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1827 (1966), pp. 46-47.

walking about were more likely to be single and white, and the term was a projection of their fantasies and anxieties.¹⁴¹

As Papson puts it, 'we can think of "walkabout"' in the Barthes sense as a mythical signifier emptied of history and substance that speaks about non-Indigenous desire rather than Indigenous material practices'. The notion of 'walkabout' highlighted British men's tensions around wandering and settling, freedom and domestication. Robert Hoddle was convinced that the Aborigines' 'unsettled and wandering habits; their aversion to any kind of application, preclude all hope of their becoming civilized', yet his own life was one of wandering: he called it 'erratic' and it made him anxious. One day he 'met a large tribe of blacks, who wanted to know, where my carbonne yunnia (large house) was. The blacks would not believe me; to use their expression bel gammon. I told them that I lived in a tent and walked about like a black fellow. They thought I was humbugging them'.¹⁴²

Advantages of civilisation without its evils?

The colony in South Australia may not have been Edward Gibbon Wakefield's dream made real but it was a serious attempt to implement his ideas for systematic colonisation by free settlers. And at a public meeting held by the South Australian Association to explain 'the principles, objects, plan, and prospects, of the new colony', a parade of speakers reiterated all the themes found in utopian literature, previous proposals for colonisation, and contemporary emigration literature, including the Biblical allusions. Mr Whitmore declared that the chosen site possessed 'every qualification that may be necessary to form a great country and a prosperous people', all that was needed was an 'intelligent, active, and industrious' population. Mr Poulett Scrope asked whether anyone could believe 'that those tracts, so fitted for the residence of man, were intended by their Creator to remain always the dwelling of serpents and brutes alone'. Mr Grote offered 'certain and assured hope to the honest and industrious cultivator of the soil' that he would 'arise in the world' and 'leave to his children a lot and station in society superior to that which he possessed himself'. Colonel Torrens suggested that their scheme would 'assist to replenish the earth, to extend Christianity and civilization to the remote portions of the earth' and Captain

¹⁴¹ Stephen Papson, 'Discursive Walkabout', Baz Luhrmann's *Australia Reviewed*, National Museum of Australia, Canberra, 7-8 December 2009.

¹⁴² Hoddle, *Diary*, pp. 77/84, 89

Gowan made clear that in extending 'the boundary of civilization' and enlarging 'the empire of commerce' a man would 'benefit himself, aye, and speedily too'. And Mr Clay, with echoes of Thomas Paine, exclaimed that '[t]he gigantic energies of England want space for their exertion'. *The Morning Chronicle*, a national newspaper, printed the speeches over two full pages, including the cheers and 'hear, hears' of the audience which the paper reported as some two and a half thousand people.¹⁴³

The Australian colonies did not see the creation of a new 'social system', with a 'return to the simplicity of primitive life, without its rudeness', that is 'civilization with its advantages, but without its evils and vices',¹⁴⁴ but by and large emigrant's letters and diaries portrayed life as positive and migration as successful. Emancipated convicts tended to write similarly of their experiences, saying little about their hardships as convicts in letters to family.¹⁴⁵ It does seem that many men believed that with 'a little luck and a little gumption' they too 'could be Robinson Crusoe' which is how historian and theologian Todd R Flanders says eighteenth-century readers would have viewed Defoe's novel.¹⁴⁶ Henry William Haygarth wrote admiringly of men with 'zeal and energy' who stood firm in the face of adversity, especially of those among them 'who had been brought up to luxury and refinement' but had become 'so enamoured of their new existence, that they would not readily embrace any other less independent, or, as we should call it here, more civilized'.¹⁴⁷ Penelope Selby's husband was such a one who 'would not exchange his present dirty work for his old life of gentility at home'.¹⁴⁸ And through that dirty work men quickly formed attachment to their land, as the British and colonial authorities found when they moved settlers from Norfolk Island to Van Diemen's Land. The move took eight years from 1804 to 1813 because of resistance from settlers who were emotionally-bound to their new home.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴³ *The Morning Chronicle*, 26 June 1834, 1 July 1834.

¹⁴⁴ James Waugh, *Three Years' Practical Experience of a Settler in New South Wales; Being Extracts from Letters to His Friends in Edinburgh, From 1834 to 1837*, 5th edition, John Johnstone, Edinburgh, 1838, p. x; very similar words were used by poet Robert Southey, quoted in James C McKusick, "'Wisely Forgetful": Coleridge and the Politics of Pantisocracy', in Tim Fulford and Peter J Kitson (ed), *Romanticism and Colonialism: Writing and Empire, 1780-1830*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, p. 109.

¹⁴⁵ Doust, *English Migrants*, p. 305; Bruce Hindmarsh, 'Wherever I go I will right to you' in Lucy Frost and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart (eds), *Chain Letters: Narrating Convict Lives*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001, pp. 174-175.

¹⁴⁶ Todd R Flanders, 'Rousseau's Adventure with Robinson Crusoe', *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy*, vol. 24 (3), Spring, 2007, p. 333.

¹⁴⁷ Haygarth, *Recollections*, p. 3.

¹⁴⁸ Quoted in Frost, *No Place for a Nervous Lady*, p. 160.

¹⁴⁹ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, pp. 310-314.

Along with Tom Jones, Tristram Shandy, Roderick Random, and countless other adventurers who ended their days where they began, Robinson Crusoe did make a final return home at the end of his further adventures.¹⁵⁰ In acknowledging a new home on the other side of the world British men in the Australian colonies parted with Defoe's novel. Thomas Carlyle would like us to think of these as 'new' men,¹⁵¹ however, British men, full of seemingly related promises from the Bible, emigration literature, official recommendations, and letters and accounts of those who had gone before, found themselves confronting the same anxieties they had in Britain. While they consoled themselves in town with promises of going bush, and told themselves of the independence they gained as they cleared and tamed 'their' land, the bush that promised them freedom seemed always beyond their reach. Perhaps that is because it always was. As Haygarth expressed it: the 'precise definition' of the bush is

perhaps not so easily given, even by an old colonist: the resident in Sydney would be apt to consider it any place beyond the suburbs of the town; the Hawkesbury or Illawarra farmer would place it between 30 and 100 miles from the capital; while the distant settler, the *bonâ fide* bushman, would smile at such fireside notions, and from his dwelling, 300 miles from Port Jackson, he still talks of "going into the bush," which in his sense of the term implies his own lonely out-stations, or regions untrodden by the white man.¹⁵²

That the 'bush' could be 'any place beyond the boundaries of [a man's] own homestead, and "on this side of Sundown"'¹⁵³ expressed the utopian, and thus unattainable nature of the concept.

¹⁵⁰ Paul R Backscheider, 'Defoe's Prodigal Sons', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, vol. 15 (2), Fall, 1982, pp. 17-18; Defoe, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, p. 373.

¹⁵¹ Carlyle, *Past and Present and Chartism*, pp. 385-386.

¹⁵² Haygarth, *Recollections*, p. 10.

¹⁵³ Haygarth, *Recollections*, p. 10.

Chapter 6:

The middle station of life – the anxieties of social mobility

A thousand nameless little things — An air of independence — A necessity of social life — Unkind gossipings, petty jealousies, difficulties of greater magnitude — The world is too small

Robinson Crusoe's father firmly believed that the 'middle state' of life was 'the most suited to human happiness'. As he told his son, those enjoying this station were 'not exposed to the miseries and hardships, the labour and sufferings of the mechanick part of mankind, and not embarrass'd with the pride, luxury, ambition and envy of the upper part of mankind'. Medical writers tended to agree that the 'middling' orders of society were most favoured for health and longevity, as did many men who, like Josiah Conder, was thankful that 'Providence' had placed him in 'that sphere of respectable mediocrity' which was 'most favourable to happiness'. If those of the middle station were ever really contented, however, that perception had changed for many by the 1830s when Edward Gibbon Wakefield described the middle class as 'uneasy:' though not labourers they suffered from the distresses of agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, 'and many more kinds of distress, of which the names and descriptions have appeared over and over again during the last fifteen years'. The variety of terms used by eighteenth-century writers – 'interests', 'ranks', 'orders', 'the labouring poor', 'the People' or, like Defoe, the 'middle state' that preceded the cohesiveness and political connotations of the term 'middle class' established in the 1840s – expressed a feeling that the great chain of being that specified a man's precise place in the order of things was coming asunder.¹

¹ Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, London, 1790 (1719), pp. 3-4; John Sinclair, *The Code of Health and Longevity*, G and W Nicol, London, 1818, p. 537; Eustace R Conder, *Josiah Conder. A Memoir*, John Snow, London, 1857, p. 18; MF Lloyd Prichard (ed), *The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, Collins, Glasgow & London, 1968, p. 355; Asa Briggs, 'Middle-Class Consciousness in English Politics, 1780-1846', *Past and Present*, vol. 9, April, 1956, p. 65; Lawrence E Klein, 'Politeness for Plebes: Consumption and Social Identity in Early Eighteenth-century England', in Bermingham, Ann and John, Brewer (eds), *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p. 365.

For Defoe's readers at the turn of the nineteenth century, increasing social mobility enabled by commercial opportunities, warfare and empire building made the stipulation of rigid hierarchical distinctions an uneasy business – as the depictions of subtle social distinctions in Jane Austen's novels so clearly illustrated. Men's endeavours to make a place for themselves in this stratified but no longer clearly delineated society were expressed in terms of maintaining or pursuing independence, which was itself a slippery concept. Commonly associated with freedom from patronage in the eighteenth century and with autonomy of action and opinion by the mid-nineteenth century, its use during the period of this study covered all of this and more.² Moreover, men's exertions in the name of independence were no simple matter of discourse, they were visible in all aspects of their lives, from the way they interacted with each other down to their dress and the subtle control of their bodily gestures.

This chapter examines the difficulties men faced in their pursuit of an ambiguous independence: the torrent of etiquette and conduct manuals that gave directions on the minutiae of social dealings but left men vulnerable to accusations of insincerity; the manners and clothes that could display material success and conceal class origins, yet also reveal the artificiality of that attainment; and the homosocial networks that introduced newer notions of obligation that were as arguably constraining as patronage. In the Australian colonies, where real opportunities for change in social circumstance seemed possible, there was still no escaping what Crusoe's father saw as the 'general plague of mankind' which was men 'not being satisfied with the station wherein God and nature hath placed them'.³ Not only were the trappings of civilised society quickly in place, the uncertainty about a man's place in the social sphere was actually heightened. The 'middle state' may have provided the material potential for the happiness of 'mankind' but it was not an easy place for a man to find, let alone maintain, in Britain or Australia.

Sociologist Norbert Elias observes at this time 'a transformation of European societies which demanded of their individual members greater regularity and differentiation of conduct'. This process was expressed in submission to a demarcated regulatory time-schedule, in accountability in terms of money, and in the growing length and differentiation of chains of interdependence.⁴ This binding of men – temporally,

² John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*, Yale University Press, London, 1999, p. 111.

³ Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 245.

⁴ Norbert Elias, 'The Genesis of Sport as a Sociological Problem', in Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning (eds), *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986, p. 151.

monetarily and socially – can be viewed as a paradox for men who pursued independence: men who, according to the *Quarterly Review*, were ‘restless and dissatisfied, and straining every faculty of mind and body for the improvement of their condition, to a degree of which no former age can furnish an example’.⁵ And independence through self improvement seemed as unattainable as independence on the land. Edward Eyre wondered on his twenty-third birthday what his years of ‘wild rambling life’ had achieved when he was ‘still as far off from the prospect of repose or independence as ever’.⁶

A thousand nameless little things

Historian Paul Langford describes the men and women of Britain during the period of this study as ‘a polite and commercial people’. For Langford their politeness was a ‘logical consequence of commerce’, the product of an emerging commercial and ‘vigorous’ middle class, involved in both production and consumption, who ‘required a more sophisticated means of regulating manners’. ‘In theory’, writes Langford, ‘politeness comprehended, even began with, morals, but in practice it was as much a question of material acquisitions and urbane manners’.⁷ Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu would see politeness as a response to a society in transition where socio-cultural principles were unstable. The body is a primary site for instilling these principles so at such a time of change, the body takes on a new emphasis. This is why, according to Bourdieu, societies ‘that seek to produce a new man... set such store on the seemingly most insignificant details of *dress*, *bearing*, physical and verbal *manners*’.⁸ The influential Lord Chesterfield seemed to understand this when, in 1749, he argued that ‘A thousand nameless little things, which nobody can describe, but which everybody feels, conspire to form that *whole* of pleasing’.⁹ The etiquette guides and conduct manuals that bristled with admonition over these small details echoed religious material

⁵ Article on ‘Report from the Select Committee on Criminal Laws, &c.; ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 8th July, 1819’ in *The Quarterly Review*. Vol XXIV, October & January, John Murray, London, 1820-1821, p. 195.

⁶ Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1859 (1984), pp.165-166.

⁷ Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, p. 4.

⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Richard Nice (trans), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1977, p. 94; Terence Bowers, ‘Reconstituting the National Body in Smollett’s *Travels through France and Italy*’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 21 (1), pp. 1-25, 1997, p. 2.

⁹ Lord Chesterfield, *Letters Written by Philip Dormer Earl of Chesterfield to His Son 1737-1768*, WW Gibbings, London, 1890, p. 230.

in their calls for self-control, but political commentators, too, were concerned with the way men behaved. Common to all the prescriptions was the acknowledgment that manly behaviour was not innate, it needed to be learned. Men's own writings revealed just how difficult this could be.

These conduct guides were very exact in their directives on every aspect they covered. They exhorted men to, for example, speak without heat and violence, keep their word, and allow time for business and recreation every day; and to avoid drunkenness, the company of gamesters, the reading of 'Romantical Adventures' and audible laughter.¹⁰ They were quite specific on comportment: on how to bow, how to give and receive, and how to behave at the dinner table, in the drawing room and walking in the street. Such detailed instructions on daily practicalities were clearly considered by many readers as necessary for success in society.¹¹ The regular inclusion in advice books of directives on the precedence of dinner guests – how, for example, the wife of a younger son of an earl had precedence over the wife of an heir to a baronet – flatteringly implied that the reader would have such guests. We might regard such publications as responses to social fantasies of moving in the upper circles, but they were clearly received as practical guides for the socially mobile.¹²

The constant curbing of behaviour advocated in this literature had always been apparent in religious material. Books, pamphlets and tracts cautioned against a gamut of sins and misdemeanors. One comprehensive publication was *The Whole Duty of Man*, which billed itself as 'Necessary for all families'. It covered care of the soul; duty of prayer; the sins of pride, adultery, lying and deceit; the necessity of diligence, chastity and temperance in drinking; the benefits of sleep; and the duties of, and to, parents, brethren, husbands, masters and servants, neighbours, and so on. William Burkitt's *Help and Guide to Christian Families* was similarly exhaustive in its 'particular advices for the well managing of every day'.¹³ Josiah Woodward extended Christian

¹⁰ For example, Richard Lingard, *A Letter of Advice to a Young Gentleman Leaving the University, Concerning his Behaviour in the World*, London, 1671; George Chapman, *A Treatise of Education*, Edinburgh, 1773; Jean Gailhard, *The Compleat Gentleman or Directions for the Education of Youth as to their Breeding at Home, and Travelling Abroad*, London, 1678.

¹¹ Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800*, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, England, 2001, p. 77; Klein, 'Politeness for plebes', pp. 362-382.

¹² *The Polite Academy; or, school of behaviour for young gentlemen and ladies. Intended as a foundation for good manners and polite address*, 10th edition, BC Collins, London, 1798; Linda Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century: America, Australia and Britain*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, 2003, p. 129.

¹³ *The Whole Duty of Man, Laid Down In a Plain and Familiar Way, for the Use of All, but especially the Meanest Reader*, 1774; William Burkitt, *An Help and Guide to Christian Families*, JF and C Rivington, J Buckland, T Longman, C Dilly, GGJ and J Robinson and S Bladon, London, 1787.

self-control to specific groups of men in his collection of 'monitors' which were in print throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. Soldiers were urged to 'behave themselves with a just Regard to Religion and true Manhood'. 'Sea-faring Men' were urged to control their behaviour 'Before, in, and after their Voyage' and were offered prayers to assist.¹⁴ Christopher Claxton's *Naval Monitor* in the 1830s drew particular attention to the 'minutiae of your duty' and 'the minutiae of seamanship'.¹⁵ Even 'Public Housekeeper's' were not exempt from special attention.¹⁶ Thomas Gisborne similarly outlined the duties of men in 'the higher and middle classes of society' from peers to magistrates, physicians and 'private gentlemen'.¹⁷

Authors quite distinct from evangelical moralists were equally committed to defining and prescribing ideals of controlled manly behaviour. In his book, *The Enquirer. Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature*, 1797, radical author William Godwin was comprehensive in the diverse areas of men's lives on which he offered advice: in awakening their minds; using their talents; encouraging their taste in reading, learning and study; obtaining confidence; communicating knowledge; the sources of popularity and disapprobation; the benefits of politeness and the reciprocal claims of politeness and sincerity.¹⁸ Another radical, William Cobbett, published his *Advice to Young Men* in twelve installments beginning in June 1829. His intention was that any young man, for the total price of 'six shillings, expended in one year of his life' might acquire the knowledge that would enable him to 'pass the rest of his life with as little as possible of those troubles and inconveniences which arise from want of being warned of danger in time'. He supposed his readers to be in 'the middle rank of life' who would find happiness 'only in *independence*', which for Cobbett meant '*work* of some sort or other'. Accordingly he described 'book-learning' as not to be 'despised' but suggested that literary pursuits should never be relied on for support (it would be better to 'stick' to

¹⁴ Josiah Woodward, *The Soldier's Monitor; being Serious Advice to Soldiers, to behave themselves with a just Regard to Religion and true Manhood*, John Rivington, London, 1769; Josiah Woodward, *The Seaman's Monitor; or, Advice to Sea-faring Men, with Reference to their Behaviour Before, in, and after their Voyage. With Prayers for their Use.*, John Rivington, London, 1769. (This monitor was first published 1700, 20th edition in 1812: Margarette Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power, 1750-1815*, Ashgate, Aldershot, England, 2002, p. 117.)

¹⁵ Christopher Claxton, *The Naval Monitor; Containing Many Useful Hints For Both the Public and Private Conduct of the Young Gentlemen In, or Entering, That Profession, In All Its Branches.*, AJ Valpy, London, 1833, pp. 137, 154.

¹⁶ Advertised in Josiah Woodward, *The Young Man's Monitor; Shewing The Great Happiness of Early Piety, and the Dreadful Consequences of Indulging in Youthful Lusts*, FC and J Rivington, London, 1821.

¹⁷ Thomas Gisborne, *An Enquiry into the Duties of Men in the Higher and Middle Classes of Society in Great Britain, Resulting from Their Respective Stations*, E and J White, London, 1794.

¹⁸ William Godwin, *The Enquirer. Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature. In A Series Of Essays*, Robert Campbell & Co, Philadelphia, 1797.

‘the shop’), Like most authors of conduct literature he urged men to choose their companions carefully.¹⁹

Arguably the most influential conduct book, certainly the one that prompted most debate, was by Philip Dormer Stanhope, fourth earl of Chesterfield. His collection of letters to his son repeated much of the etiquette wisdom of the eighteenth century: from avoiding ‘awkward attitudes’ and ‘disgusting habits, such as scratching yourself’, to entering and leaving a room with ease, being polite to servants, smiling often but never laughing, avoiding drink, gluttony, gambling and low company, choosing a wife with discretion, and making friends not enemies. Chesterfield’s addition to this advice was his elegant expression of how these external manners of politeness might exist independently of inner virtue.²⁰

Chesterfield’s letters, which were never intended for publication, caused widespread, immediate and ongoing comment. Samuel Johnson dismissed them as teaching ‘the morals of a whore and the manners of a dancing master’ yet added that, if the ‘immorality’ were removed, they would make ‘a very pretty book’, which ‘should be put into the hands of every young gentleman’.²¹ Pierce Egan, author of *Boxiana* and the prototype of the modern sports journalist, claimed that their invitation to dissimulation caused more injury to public morality than boxing. John Younger, a shoemaker, said Chesterfield had a knack for observing ‘all the delicate *minutiae* of refined taste... but he is ignorant of *life*’. The Reverend Polwhele was uneasy about a new acquaintance as he ‘had read Chesterfield: and Chesterfield [he] had been taught to consider as immoral’.²² The ‘expurgated Chesterfield’ that Samuel Johnson desired was offered by authors like the Reverend Dr John Trusler, whose abridged versions of Chesterfield’s letters disseminated his message even further than the originals.²³ Trusler shed some

¹⁹ William Cobbett, *The Autobiography of William Cobbett*, Faber and Faber, London, 1967, pp. 204-205; William Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, Henry Frowde, London, 1906 (1829), pp. 10, 31-33, 40-41.

²⁰ Lord Chesterfield, *Letters to His Son*, 1774.

²¹ John Cannon, ‘Stanhope, Philip Dormer, fourth earl of Chesterfield (1694–1773)’, ODNB, Oxford University Press, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/26255>>, accessed 16/6/2009>; Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, p. 79.

²² Pierce Egan, *Boxiana. Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism*, Vance Harvey Publishing, Leicester, England, 1812, p. 4; John Younger, *Autobiography of John Younger, Shoemaker*, St. Boswells, J & JH Rutherford, Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1881, pp. xviii-xix; Rev R Polwhele, *Traditions and Recollections; Domestic, Clerical, and Literary; in which are included Letters of Charles II, Cromwell, Fairfax, Edgecumbe, Macaulay, Wolcot [Wolcott?], Opie, Whitaker, Gibbon, Buller, Courtenay, Moore, Downman, Drewe, Seward, Darwin, Cowper, Hayley, Hardinge, Sir Walter Scott, and Other Distinguished Characters*, John Nichols, London, 1826, p. 85.

²³ Samuel Austin Allibone, *Dictionary of English Literature and British and American Authors, Living and Deceased, From the Earliest Accounts to the Middle of the Nineteenth Century. Containing Thirty Thousand Biographies and Literary Notices, with Forty Indexes of Subjects*, Childs & Peterson,

light on the endurance of their contested advice: 'Though Lord Chesterfield has been condemned for recommending simulation among men', he wrote, 'there is no getting on peaceably without it'.²⁴

Chesterfield's correspondence to his illegitimate son – over four hundred letters beginning when his son was five and ending four weeks before his son's death in 1768 at the age of thirty-six – is an exaggerated version of what literate men were subjected to: a bombardment of advice and prescription on how to be a man. The son, Philip Stanhope, grew up a shy, deceitful, graceless and awkward man who broke down during his maiden speech in parliament and never spoke there again. Chesterfield wrote a further two hundred odd letters to his godson, also named Philip Stanhope, and some fifty to the young Lord Huntingdon. It seems that neither of them turned out to be any more successful than his son.²⁵

That a man, whatever his birth, had to work at being a gentleman was the premise of all this conduct literature. The modern biographer of Captain Robert Barclay noted this: he concluded that Barclay was 'a gentleman by birth and an athlete from choice and he had always assumed that he could live in both worlds, slipping from one to the other at will, and welcomed in both. It was a tough lesson that he had to work at being a gentleman too and that perhaps he had not worked hard enough at it'.²⁶ As Trusler, paraphrasing Chesterfield, stressed, a man must 'labour' to acquire 'this intuitive knowledge'. And like any labour, it could be tiring: as GTWB Boyes in Van Diemen's Land told his diary of an evening party: 'Everybody seemed exhausted with the civil things they were obliged to utter'.²⁷

The obsession with the minutiae of bodily control echoed a model of developmental psychology articulated by David Hartley earlier in the eighteenth century and popularised by Joseph Priestley in the 1770s. Hartley used the example of learning a musical instrument to illustrate his theory of the development of habits, wherein

Philadelphia, 1858, p. 377; for example, they were in the library at Rugby in 1798: Samuel Butler, *The Life and Letters of Dr. Samuel Butler*, John Murray, London, 1896, p. 36.

²⁴ Quoted in Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century: America, Australia and Britain*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 131.

²⁵ John Cannon, 'Stanhope'.

²⁶ Peter Radford, *The Celebrated Captain Barclay: Sport, Gambling and Adventure in Regency Times*, Review (Headline Book Publishing), London, 2002, pp. 191-192.

²⁷ Trusler, *Principles of Politeness*, p. 42; Wilfrid Hugh Hudspeth, *Hudspeth Memorial Volume: And Introduction to the Diaries of The Rev. Robert Knopwood, A.M. and G.T.W.B. Boyes*, LG Shea, Government Printer, Hobart, 1954, p. 111.

conscious motions of the hands, in time and with practice, become automatic.²⁸ With practice many types of actions, like the skills of the musician and, hopefully, like those required of a gentleman, become secondary and automatic. Historian Greg Denning observes this when he writes that in discipline there is 'the sense that actions and their repeated practice shape the man'.²⁹ Gender can be considered as disciplined habit formation; a form of social construction written on the body in stances, gaits, gestures, and facial expression and control. Pierre Bourdieu called this social mastery of the body 'bodily dressage' and it marks not only gender, but also class distinctions.³⁰ Success in acquiring what Trusler called 'intuitive knowledge' lay, therefore, in hiding the 'labour' involved. Manners, like clothes should appear to fit comfortably and naturally. That both could be 'put on' exposed the blurring of class boundaries and the potential for failure in being seen as a gentleman, or even as a 'man'.

Dress was the most visible marker of social borders, but those borders did not always clearly define what was in- or outside them.³¹ When King Charles II adopted a style that can be viewed as the forerunner to the three-piece suit, he made a political virtue out of a fashion statement that supported restraint in dress, and behaviour: it was a response to the perceived effeminating effects of unregulated consumer culture. Between 1750 and 1850, according to historian David Kuchta, this reserve became a feature in 'a struggle between aristocratic and middle-class men for political, social, and economic superiority, for the moral high ground that allowed them to claim to speak for the nation'.³² So it was that, in the 1780s, Charles James Fox shunned the sartorial elegance of the aristocracy and dressed down. He was the first politician to be depicted as a plebian in contemporary satirical prints.³³ And for similar reasons, farmers in these prints were always represented as homely, dependable types, with the iconic figure of 'John Bull' wearing the dress of an eighteenth-century farmer well into the nineteenth

²⁸ David Hartley, *Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty, and His Expectations*, 4th edition, 1801 pp. 108-109; Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason*, WW Norton & Company, New York, 2004, pp. 348-360; Joseph Priestley, *Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind, on the Principle of the Association of Ideas; with Essays relating to the Subject of it*, 1775, foreword.

²⁹ Greg Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, p. 131.

³⁰ Bridget Fowler, 'Reading Pierre Bourdieu's *Masculine Domination*: Notes towards an intersectional analysis of gender, culture and class', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 17 (3/4), 2003, p. 472.

³¹ Terence Bowers, 'Reconstituting the National Body', p. 7.

³² David Kuchta, *The Three Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550-1850*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002, pp. 16, 164.

³³ John Brewer, *The Common People and Politics 1750-1790*, Chadwyck-Healey, Cambridge, 1986, pp. 30-31.

century despite actual farmers being almost as prone to the temptations of fashion as their manufacturing counterparts in towns and cities.³⁴

The artifice, but also the significance, of dress, was highlighted in an 1808 edition of the *Odd Fellow's Magazine* where a tailor was presented, satirically but not without awareness of the paradoxes of consumption, as being the most useful of all men. As the tailor's soliloquy went, 'not a man is a man without me'. Where would judges and bishops be without their 'furred gowns and lawn sleeves'? Or the soldiers without their 'scarlet cloth', 'gold lace' and 'worsted epaulets'? 'Brave' sailors without their 'jacket and trousers; why, they would be as bared-bottomed as so many Mounseers, and then we should see that they had no bottom neither'. 'Even kings would be Sans Culottes', if the tailor 'turned traitor, and refused to make them breeches'. Tailors, therefore, deserved more respect, and if they did not get it, 'each mother's son' was at risk of being 'reduced to the primitive fig-leaf apron'.³⁵

The social borders marked by dress, where aristocrats were represented as ornate and indulgent and the lower orders defined by simplicity and constraint, were continually subverted by a submission to fashion or resistance to its temptations which did not necessarily stem from membership in a particular class. Confusion was often the result. Fashionable dress could prevent the clerk from being distinguished from his master, and the Vicar of Wakefield could mistake a neighbour's butler for the gentleman of the house. That the butler did not clarify the confusion amounted to the egregious deception that critics of fashion and luxury feared.³⁶ Even boxers played with dress. For the Humphries versus Mendoza prizefight in January 1788, Mendoza dressed quite simply but his opponent wore a pair of flannel draws, white silk stockings with gold coloured clocks, pumps and black strings, which were quite useless on a rain-slippery stage. During the Pearce versus Belcher bout of 1805, spectators wore silk handkerchiefs in support of their favourites; blue with a white spot for Pearce and a yellow stripe for Belcher. These boxing fans, known as 'the Fancy', could be identified by their dress of 'a large drab coat' with a 'fanlike cape' at the nape.³⁷

³⁴ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, Routledge, London, 2002, p. 260.

³⁵ *The Odd Fellow's Magazine*, J Lee, London, 1808, Number 2, February, pp. 70-71.

³⁶ *The Citizen*, No 21, Friday, 29 June 1739, p. 98; Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Groombridge and Sons, London, 1858, pp. 92-94.

³⁷ *Pancratia, or a History of Pugilism*, W Oxberry, London, 1812, pp. 75-76, 248; John Ford, *Prizefighting: The Age of Regency Boximania*, David & Charles Limited, Devon, 1971, pp. 157-158.

The distinctions marked by dress were potentially dangerous, so that an act of Parliament in 1827 forbade the distribution of ribbons, cockades and other emblems of partisanship at elections in an unsuccessful effort to prevent disturbances. Dress could also identify shared concerns that cut across class such as the widespread adoption of mourning dress (or at least a black ribbon among the lower classes) after the death of George III in 1820.³⁸ But dress did not always present an accurate version of the wearer. John Sinclair described an American visitor as 'in appearance quite the republican, wearing his own hair, unpowdered, even when he went to court'. That 'his manners were in the highest degree polite, courteous and agreeable' seemed to surprise Sinclair. But it was increasingly understood, as Pierce Egan quoted, 'Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow; The rest is all but leather or prunella'.³⁹

It was certainly the case that behaviour as a mark of social status increased in importance as dress became similar across classes.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, manners were open to accusations of duplicity, as highlighted in the controversy over Lord Chesterfield's letters. Just as dress could hide unclean bodies, or those of an inappropriate class, manners could conceal unclean minds, or lack of good breeding.⁴¹ The particular behaviour that was idealised at the end of the eighteenth century and captured in the term 'sensibility' was seen by its proponents to offer an alternative behaviour to this suspect politeness.⁴²

In its simplest definition, sensibility referred to a consciousness of both one's own and other's feelings. While the image of the polite man focussed on speech, conversational skills and deportment, and fashionable society, the physical expectations of the man of sensibility were more expressive, expected to arise from genuine feeling, and available to humble as well as rich men. Both politeness and sensibility were woven into a common eighteenth-century conception of 'true and manly courage' that was characterised by self-control, consideration and compassion, but in promoting this

³⁸ Katrina Navickas, "'That sash will hang you': Political Clothing and Adornment in England, 1780-1840", *Journal of British Studies*, vol. (49), July, 2010, p. 547-548.

³⁹ John Sinclair, *The Correspondence of The Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair*, Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, London, 1831, p. 56; Pierce Egan, *Boxiana. Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism*, facsimile edition, August 1971, Leicester, England, Vance Harvey Publishing, p. 174.

⁴⁰ Klein, 'Politeness for Plebes', p. 374; Emma Floyd, 'Without Artificial Constraint: Gentility and British Gentlewomen in Rural Australia', in Rita S Krandis (ed), *Imperial Objects: Essays on Victorian Women's Emigration and the Unauthorized Imperial Experience*, Twayne Publishers (Simon & Schuster Macmillan), New York, 1998, pp. 87-89.

⁴¹ Bowers, 'Reconstituting the National Body', p. 12; Navickas, 'That sash will hang you', p. 550.

⁴² Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, pp. 79-80, 32; 'Politeness', *Farrago. Containing essays, moral, philosophical, political, and historical: on Shakespeare, truth, boxing, kings, ... Abstracts and selections on various subjects*, 1792, p. 100.

refined manliness, both polite and sentimental commentators were faced with the potential of creating 'effeminate fools' rather than manly role models.⁴³ The looked for 'naturalism' could be 'a cover for ever more contrived artifice'.⁴⁴ Moreover, advocates of sensibility were as prescriptive in their advice as any conduct manual and their encouragement of less regulated and more expressive behaviour may very well have added to men's struggles to achieve successful manly behaviour. Even Mr Darcy, Austen's most high-born character, fell short of 'gentleman-like' behaviour. In this light, Jane Austen's Mr Collins practising 'elegant compliments' but always wishing to deliver them with 'as unstudied an air as possible' is a subject of pity rather than ridicule.⁴⁵

Self-control included mastery of one's temper but, like mastery of one's appearance, manners and bodily gestures, it took effort – as individual men attested. JB Scott strove to eradicate his '[a]nger & peevishness of temper', and the Reverend Samuel Marsdens tried to avoid all quarrel, sometimes doing 'violence' to his 'own feelings for the sake of Peace'.⁴⁶ There were various attempts, by social commentators and individuals themselves, to reconcile politeness and sensibility with the more traditional expectations of men that allowed for aggression, from David Hume's 1752 essay, 'Of refinement in the arts and sciences', in which he proposed a superior form of military courage that was not at odds with involvement in female society or the broader phenomenon of an emerging commercial economy, to the popularity of prizefighters like 'Gentleman' John Jackson, who merged physical strength and courage with easy manners in respectable society.⁴⁷ Another strategy was to promote bluntness and simplicity as virtues, signs of sincerity in a duplicitous world. The caricature John Bull, roughly dressed, roughly spoken, but always sincere, who had no distinction between 'appearance' and 'reality', exemplified this response.⁴⁸ Striking a balance between blunt and simpering manners remained difficult. If a choice was required, Cobbett preferred

⁴³ Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, p. 91, 108, 116; John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, Harper Collins, London, 1997, pp. 114-115.

⁴⁴ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, p. 477.

⁴⁵ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Penguin Group, London, 2003 (1813), pp. 67, 188.

⁴⁶ Ethel Mann (ed), *An Englishman at Home and Abroad 1792-1828 with some recollections of Napoleon: being extracts for the diaries of J. B. Scott of Bungay, Suffolk*, Heath Cranton Limited, London, 1930, p. 228; Letters from Marsden family to Mary and John Stokes, ML, MSS 719, CY175, [82].

⁴⁷ Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, p. 76; Karen Downing, 'The Gentleman Boxer: Boxing, Manners, and Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century England', *Men and Masculinities*, vol. 12(3), January, 2010, pp. 328-352.

⁴⁸ Bowers, 'Reconstituting the National Body', pp. p. 14; Stella Cottrell, 'The Devil on Two Sticks: Franco-phobia in 1803', in Raphael Samuel (ed), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity*, Routledge, London, 1989, p. 263.

the former, but the Americans, he thought, had got it right – ‘always *civil*, never *servile*’. He wished that ‘every English youth’ could benefit from their example.⁴⁹

Mastery of the body through clothes and behaviour defined who belonged to a particular class, and who did not. However, the potential that this mastery of movement and manners could be learned, that it was not just a product of breeding, was a paradox, wherein the barrier to insider privilege was simultaneously made permeable and its transgression camouflaged. As historian Linda Young observes, acceptance into the inner circle acknowledged how self-education in manners was equivalent to a ‘genteel upbringing’ and that acceptance amounted to a ‘collusive myth’ among peers: if ‘gentility’ was an outcome of inborn nature, then the person with that character must have always been so. However, the ‘polite pretence’ necessary to facilitate the myth ‘contained room for a degree of suspicion of any new acquaintance, adding a stressful undertone to many social encounters’.⁵⁰

An air of independence

Robinson Crusoe, alone on his island, faced none of these quandaries. He was ‘removed from all the wickedness of the world’ subject to ‘neither the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life’.⁵¹ Emigrant Edward Landor acknowledged the attraction of this more ‘natural’ state. He pitied the thousands in England ‘bound to keep up a certain degree of appearances’, who ‘curse the artificial state of society in which they are compelled to live’. In the colonies, he wrote, there was ‘no necessity for sacrificing peace of mind to appearance’. However, Landor and his fellow emigrants were not alone on their island, and there was no escaping the expectations of a man’s behaviour: appearances may be overlooked, but a man must still prove himself ‘to be of gentlemanly mould’ if he wished to be ‘treated as an equal’.⁵² The trappings of civilised society were in place early in the Australian colonies’ histories and appearances and behaviour remained important considerations.

The first colony at Port Jackson was virtually a military prison but it was transformed in one generation into a consuming society. By 1792 officers of the New South Wales

⁴⁹ Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, p. 33.

⁵⁰ Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 126.

⁵¹ Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 162.

⁵² Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, pp. 119, 121.

Corps profited on the purchase and reselling of consignments of readymade clothing from India and cargoes of calicoes, gurrah shirts, muslins, shoes and hats. From the 1820s, French as well as British fashions were emulated and French fabrics, jewellery and accessories were available in Hobart and Sydney, and Parisian milliners ran successful businesses'.⁵³ Sydney had ten mills (steam, water and wind driven) for grinding wheat and corn, two distilleries, leather and other manufactories, several whaling and sealing vessels, two banks, and stores of all description. The variety of strange sounds and diverse tongues to be heard on the streets meant Sydney sounded like a 'City of Babel on a small scale'.⁵⁴ 'Parrots would seem at the first glance through the street to be the staple product of the colony, so many are exposed for sale in cages', observed Sydney clerk James F O'Connell.⁵⁵ Similarly, Melbourne was described by a new arrival in 1839, just four years after it was founded, as a 'champagne-loving little town'.⁵⁶

In preparation for the 1826 King's Birthday Ball, '[t]ailors, and tailoresses, shoemakers and shopmen', were in great demand. 'The dollars and dumps were circulating in every direction – shopping here – shopping there – shopping everywhere'.⁵⁷ Until the financial crash of 1842, residents of Sydney of varying degrees of wealth consumed personal and domestic goods with an enthusiasm only recently demonstrated by the evidence of archaeology. Furniture from Britain and India arrived by the boatload and by 1840 the Australian market was England's second largest, outstripping even North America. Stylish fabrics were available with only the lag in fashion which might have been found in provincial centres of Britain. In the context of consumption, historian Linda Young finds that 'the values, tastes and practices of the homeland were more continuous than disrupted by the journey to Australia'. Young finds a similar continuity in aspirations. Conduct manuals and etiquette guides printed in Australia were local

⁵³ Margaret Maynard, *Fashioned from Penury: Dress as Cultural Practice in Colonial Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, p. 9, 31, 50-51.

⁵⁴ R Therry, *Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Residence in New South Wales and Victoria, etc*, Sampson Low, London, 1863, p. 40.

⁵⁵ James F O'Connell, *A Residence of Eleven Years in New Holland and the Caroline Islands*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1972, p. 99.

⁵⁶ Edward M Curr, *Recollections of Squatting in Victoria, Then Called the Port Phillip District (From 1841 to 1851)*, Facsimile edition, 1968, George Robertson, Melbourne, 1883, p. v.

⁵⁷ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 29 April 1826; Maynard, *Fashioned from Penury*, p. 48.

imprints of British titles which made little reference to local conditions even when differences existed.⁵⁸

As in Britain, dress was a particularly visible area of consternation where observers found much difficulty in correlating appearance with a precise definition of class. This was noticeable from the earliest days when convicts looked similar to naval ratings and even Marines, unless these were in their full dress uniform. Convicts also looked similar to tradespeople, farmers and poor settlers who were in many cases ex-convicts. Publicans could not regulate the sale of alcohol to convicts on assignment when they could not be identified in appearance from other tradesmen. When clothing was scarce, transportees were even given military uniforms which, although dyed black, did little to ease confusion. Convict uniforms, when available, were not much used before the 1820s and after that they were not implemented in a systematic way.⁵⁹

Historian Margaret Maynard contends that an overt display of fashion and elaborate social mores signaled the presence of civilisation in an alien and savage environment,⁶⁰ but it was more likely to be the ex-convict than the wealthy settler being flamboyant. The Macarthur family had their clothes dispatched from England twice a year. They were not 'articles of show' as Elizabeth Macarthur thought that ridiculous 'at this distance from the Mother Country'. Although of 'superior quality', they were 'appropriate' and hard-wearing, which was 'clearly more respectable'.⁶¹ Conversely, Jane Elliott's examination of the nine known sets of store account books covering the years to 1815, and the accounts of individual settlers in the same period, establishes a pattern of inordinate expenditure on clothing by convicts and ex-convicts. Elliott concludes that in frilled calico shirt, tailor-made nankeen trousers and expensive shoes and hat, '[t]he convict dandy rather than the convict derelict was the man abroad in the streets of Sydney or Parramatta on his day off'.⁶² This lack of distinction between the convict and the free lent an 'aura of egalitarianism to Australian dress', writes Maynard, which was later 'promulgated as a more general characteristic of the colony'.⁶³ But at

⁵⁸ Linda Young, 'Extensive, economical and elegant': The Habitus of Gentility in Early Nineteenth Century Sydney', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 36 (124), pp. 201-220, 2004, pp. 201-203, 205; Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 37, 145.

⁵⁹ Maynard, *Fashioned from Penury*, pp. 6, 10-11, 13, 18-23; John B Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies: A History of Early New South Wales*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1983, p. 127.

⁶⁰ Maynard, *Fashioned from Penury*, p. 41; Alan Atkinson agrees, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 2 – Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2004, p. 147.

⁶¹ King, *Elizabeth Macarthur and Her World*, quoted in Maynard, *Fashioned from Penury*, p. 44.

⁶² Jane Elliott, 'Was There a Convict Dandy? Convict Consumer Interests in Sydney, 1788-1815', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 104 (April), 1995, p. 387.

⁶³ Maynard, *Fashioned from Penury*, p. 40.

the time, men like the Reverend Samuel Marsden complained about a convict who lived like a man of fashion, 'los[ing] no opportunity to push himself forward into that Rank of Society, or even into a higher one than the one from he had sunk by the Sentence of the Law'.⁶⁴

James Backhouse exclaimed in 1833 that his washerwoman's 'foolish indulgence of pride' of '£3 in a coral necklace for herself, and a watchchain for her husband!' disregarded the fact this 'would not alter her station in society'. Backhouse did not appreciate the power of symbols like a coral necklace and watch chain to subvert station in society. Out in the street, the washerwoman, her husband and the 'convict dandy' ensured they would be treated civilly by those who did not know them personally. Moreover, these overt displays of fashion expressed their economic independence.⁶⁵ But, while men of the labouring classes used consumer goods as a mark of independence, critics of the emerging consumer society like William Godwin, saw capitulation to wants as a form of dependence: 'It is by our wants that we are held down... They render the man who is devoted to them, the slave of every creature that breathes'.⁶⁶

Although 'independence' was cited by so many men as the motivation for moving to the Australian colonies, there was no clear consensus in their use of the term. For some men, like barrister Edward Landor on his arrival in Western Australia, an 'air of independence' was a matter of doing for themselves what servants in Britain would have done for them, while for gentleman convict John Grant, 'a level of independence' and 'self-respect' came from not being dependent on government rations. Henry William Haygarth found independence in the 'adventurer' who led a 'less artificial existence' to a settler. Matthew Flinders' 'definition of independence' was to 'live without pecuniary assistance from anyone'. (His underlining.)⁶⁷ For the convict dandy, independence was inextricably related to spending money. Independence manifested itself in other ways, too, for example: men of 'low rank' chose to enter trades or go to sea rather than work for settlers as farm servants; convict men on assignment built

⁶⁴ Quoted in Maynard, *Fashioned from Penury*, p. 57.

⁶⁵ James Backhouse, *A Narrative of A Visit to the Australian Colonies*, Hamilton, Adams and Co, London, 1843, p. 131; Elliott, 'Was There a Convict Dandy?', p. 374.

⁶⁶ Godwin, *Enquirer*, pp. 200-201.

⁶⁷ Landor, *The Bushman*, p. 45; Yvonne Cramer, *This Beauteous, Wicked Place: Letters and Journals of John Grant, Gentleman Convict*, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2000, p. 40, 51; Henry William Haygarth, *Recollections of Bush Life in Australia, During a Residence of Eight Years in the Interior*, John Murray, London, 1848, pp. 20-21, 97; Flinders to Ann Chappelle, 18 December 1800, in Paul Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders: Personal Letters from An Extraordinary Life*, Hordern House in association with the Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002, p. 55.

their own huts and cooked for themselves, a physical separation of masters and servants which did not happen in Britain; and, it was difficult to replace convict clerks with educated migrants who preferred to make their own way on the land.⁶⁸ Men making their own way, however, could still find their autonomy compromised, although Flinders appeared unaware of the irony of hoping for an advance of two or three thousand pounds from relatives to forward the mercantile plans that he hoped would see him in a few years 'independent of the world'.⁶⁹

A necessity of social life

Flinders predicament of acquiring independence through dependence on family support reveals men's entrenchment in family and community. While traditional forms of aristocratic patronage appeared less favourable in light of changing aspirations to independence, it is arguable that their replacement, in the form of 'friendship' and 'connections' maintained through overlapping activities of family, business and societies of shared interests, demanded less obligation or reciprocity. Physically distanced in the Australian colonies from these networks by thousands of miles, the significance of social and personal connections was intensified.

Given the naval and military nature of its administrations, it is not surprising that patronage was significant in the early days of the colonies. Young Daniel Southwell, onboard the *Sirius* of the First Fleet, was grateful for the 'Governor's good Offices' and 'under the greatest Obligation' to a Mrs Lanem for his eligible placement. Southwell, in turn, was looking out for a younger acquaintance, perhaps a relative, on another ship in the Fleet. Later in Port Jackson, Southwell complained of being passed over for promotion by Henry Waterhouse who did not, like him, have a 'Certificate of Qualifications' but had connections with more immediate influence. Brothers George and Richard Dixon were similarly aggrieved when on presenting their letter of introduction to Governor Lachlan Macquarie they were only granted 100 acres each. They seemed certain that had the letter been from Lord Bathurst they would have received at least 300. Although it was John Dunmore Lang's 'strong aversion to the system of patronage', and determination 'to strike out a path for [him]self' which drove

⁶⁸ Peter Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol. 2, Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1827 (1966), p. 55; Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies*, pp. 54-55, 89.

⁶⁹ Flinders to Christopher Smith, 14 February 1800, in Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders*, p. 42.

him to Australia, his brother George emigrated to New South Wales when he was 'thrown loose upon the world' following the death of 'his patron and friend'.⁷⁰

John Coghill's entry to colonial society was facilitated by his relation, through his mother, to Alexander Macleay, the colonial secretary for New South Wales. Coghill had, within six weeks of his arrival, connections to governor Ralph Darling and a business partnership with John Oxley the surveyor-general.⁷¹ But relatives were not the only source of influence. Captain Arthur Phillip promoted a favoured clerk, Henry 'Harry' Brewer to a midshipman on the *Sirius* and to provost-marshall in Port Jackson.⁷² Settlers created a form of patronage when they undertook their own recruitment of emigrants, as Thomas Potter Macqueen did from the 1820s, William Bowman and James Macarthur did in the 1830s; William Lawson Senior in 1835; Charles Campbell, Evan Mackenzie and William Rutledge in 1838; and Francis Kemble in 1840.⁷³ Even convicts benefited from forms of patronage. Matthew Flinders asked George Bass to take Joe Smith, his convict 'dock-yard man', aboard because the governor had refused his emancipation. Laetitia Wyndham, in Wiltshire, recommended Edmund White, the local blacksmith being transported for rioting, to her brother George Wyndham in New South Wales. And when William Hilton Hovell requested a teacher for his children he mentioned two convicts by name.⁷⁴ Allowing convicts to be applied for by name kept them within customary networks of influence and association.⁷⁵

Despite the tendency of emigration literature to highlight the informality of colonial life where each man could make his way by his own industriousness rather than by the use of networks of power in the complicated social structures of Britain, many new residents found that the peculiar circumstances of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land necessitated 'much caution in forming connexions', and 'a very slight

⁷⁰ Letter 1 – 19 May 1787, Letter 2 – 4 June 1787, Letter 12 – 14 April 1790, Letters from D. Southwell, concerning New South Wales, 1787-1790, BL, MS ADD 16383; Letter 1 – 1821, George and Robert Dixon, Letters from Tasmania, ML, B425, CY 2408; John Dunmore Lang, *Reminiscences of my Life and Times*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1972, p. 28; Archibald Gilchrist (ed), *John Dunmore Lang: Chiefly Autobiographical 1799 to 1878. Cleric, Writer, Traveller, Statesman, Pioneer of Democracy in Australia. An Assembling of Contemporary Documents*, Jedgram Publications, Melbourne, 1951, p. 20.

⁷¹ Christine Wright, 'Rogues and Fools': John Coghill and the Convict System in New South Wales', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 3 (2), October, 2001, p. 40.

⁷² AJ Gray, 'Brewer, Henry (1739?-1796)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010139b.htm>> 24/6/2009; Edward Spain, *Reminiscences, 1774-1802*, ML C266, CY 1403.

⁷³ Janet Doust, *English Migrants to Eastern Australia 1815-1860*, PhD Thesis, The Australian National University, 2004, pp. 162-163.

⁷⁴ Flinders to George Bass, 15 February 1800, in Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders*, p. 46; 8 April 1831, Extracts from Dinton-Dalwood letters, 1827-1853, ML, MSS 1657, CY 3815; William Hilton Hovell to Alexander Macleay, 8 August 1827 William Hilton Hovell Papers, 1811-1921, ML, Safe 1/32a-h, CY 1522.

⁷⁵ Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies*, p. 84.

knowledge of a person' could be 'sufficient for claiming acquaintance'.⁷⁶ Men therefore made great efforts to seek recommendations and introductions for their arrival in Australia, approaching distant relatives and eminent personages on the slimmest of connections. Merrick Shawe wrote to William Browne on behalf of a young mutual, but very distant, relative, despite Shawe having met Browne only once, in Calcutta. His letter outlines the myriad relationships of family and friends that connected the two to the young man in need.⁷⁷ Joiner, John Jackson, wrote directly to Robert Peel requesting his 'opinion and approbation' of Jackson's proposed emigration to 'New Holland' with his family, saying he would be 'very thankful for a Letter of recommendation from your Honour to present to the Governor of the Colony'.⁷⁸ Henry Parkes, already in Australia but needing assistance to secure a government appointment, wrote to Lord Leigh of his family's many hardships. Leigh was lord of Stoneleigh, Parkes' birthplace, but he had another reason to hope for a sympathetic hearing: Leigh was a fellow poet and Parkes enclosed a printed volume of his poems and some manuscript sonnets.⁷⁹

Connections and community were important to men of all classes. This is made very clear in the petitions for clemency lodged on behalf of convicted criminals. One offender garnered a hundred names in two collective petitions. Twenty five people signed a petition for herdsman John Macdonald, found guilty of sheep stealing, and nineteen signed that of William Gisborn, a framework knitter convicted for receiving stolen goods, including the Duke of Rutland and several magistrates. Even John William Rose, considered by the judge to be an old and dangerous offender, could claim the support of twelve people, including a magistrate, a town clerk and the Mayor of Carlisle.⁸⁰

Community for these men who came before the courts was defined by the geographical location in which they lived and worked. But connections were significant in the colonial enterprise as historian Zoë Laidlaw describes in a comprehensive

⁷⁶ Robert D Grant, *Representations of British Emigration, Colonisation and Settlement: Imagining Empire, 1800-1860*, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, 2005, p. 169; Hoddle, Diary, p. 23; Backhouse, *Narrative of A Visit*, p. 434; William Henry Breton, *Excursions in New South Wales, Western Australia, and Van Dieman's Land, during the years 1830, 1831, 1832 and 1833*, Richard Bentley, London, 1833, p. 44.

⁷⁷ 17 February 1819, Merrick Shawe, Letter to William Browne, ML, DOC 1914.

⁷⁸ 29 September 1829, UKNA, HO 44/18 ff 513-514.

⁷⁹ Henry Parkes, Letter to Lord Leigh, <<http://image.sl.nsw.gov.au/Ebind/mss5366/a1517/a1517000.html>> accessed 42//2008; David Hill Radcliffe, 'Leigh, Chandos, first Baron Leigh (1791-1850)', ODNB, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/16375>> accessed 24/6/2009.

⁸⁰ UKNA, HO 47/11/51 (1790); HO 17/39/72 (1824); HO 17/11/32 (1827); HO 47/19/37 (1795); HO 47/20/5 (1796).

account of three influential networks: the 'Peninsular' network of veterans who served on the Iberian Peninsula as young officers; the 'humanitarian' network which spread from the London Missionary Society to evangelicals, Quakers parliamentarians, and public servants in the Colonial Office; and the scientific networks which depended on appointed and self-appointed specimen collectors in all corners of the empire. One of the most significant features of these networks was how personal they were, open to 'gossip, deceit and intrigue' and creating spaces in which linear directions of authority were undermined by intimacies and shared histories. For example, the antipathy between governor Ralph Darling and surveyor-general Thomas Mitchell led to Darling's recall. Mitchell was a Peninsular veteran who used his personal connections with colonial secretary George Murray and permanent under-secretary Robert Hay to air his belief that his loyalty was to the 'public' or the 'Crown' rather than the governor. Personal connections complemented the official power of the Colonial Office to such an extent that a parallel system of administration flourished in which private letters went to the heart of matters raised in official dispatches. This practice was finally banned, but not completely halted, in 1835.⁸¹

The phenomenon of 'colonial connections' highlights Michael Kimmel's assertion of the importance of homosociality to definitions of masculinity.⁸² Historiographically, the end of the eighteenth century has been characterised as a time of women's increasing participation in public life, but it was also a time, as John Horne has described, of an 'increasingly dense associative life' for men: the late-eighteenth century was the beginning of a two hundred year 'hey-day' for 'fraternities' of all types. Fraternities ranged from formal and exclusive trade and occupational societies, like the freemasons, to informal, inclusive events such as the London Debating Societies and the corresponding societies of working men. Most of the national and provincial scientific and professional societies were founded in the period between 1750 and 1830. Political agitation – a significant characteristic of the decades around the turn of the century – and the state's responses to it, created further opportunities for male fraternity: in the democratic organisations for reform which first entered British politics in 1792 and in the Chartist and other groups of rural and semi-skilled urban workers who agitated for political reform after 1815; and in Peel's Irish Constabulary of 1814 and his Metropolitan Police of 1829 which provided further arenas for male fraternity,

⁸¹ Zoë Laidlaw, *Colonial Connections, 1815-1845: Patronage, The Information Revolution and Colonial Government*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2005, pp. 35, 49, 65-66, 94.

⁸² Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, The Free Press, New York, 1996, pp. 6-9.

this time with a professional focus that became more of a characteristic later in the nineteenth century.⁸³

The civil service was just one of the increasing number of occupational opportunities in the city, where young single men formed professional and personal bonds in the lodges and boarding houses where they lived. JJ Macintyre fondly recalled his lodgings in Russell Square, London, and the gentlemen's clubs which for men like Macintyre were 'almost a necessity of social life, as the members generally make it their home, and the centre for information'.⁸⁴ In the disciplined communities of the military forces men had long found the mutual support of other men. Sailors especially, within the specific confines of ships, experienced membership of a 'band of brothers', a notion that was given a heroic polish in the popular imagination through stories of Nelson and his men at Trafalgar.⁸⁵ Gentlemen's clubs and ships also provided social spaces free of women, thus allowing 'more freedom... in singing and conversation'.⁸⁶ Urban homosociality was a feature of Australian colonial life from early days in the form of agricultural societies, the Philosophical Society of Australia (which presented papers on topics from local astronomy to Aboriginal life), and organisations like the Sydney Institute (a reading club that built its own library) and the 'Beef Steak Club', the first private gentlemen's club in the colony, established in the mid-1830s. James Hardy Vaux reminisced about the camaraderie among Sydney's civil servants.⁸⁷

Unkind gossipings, petty jealousies, difficulties of greater magnitude

As we have already seen in the case of the mutiny on the *Bounty* and emigrants' accounts of the voyage to the Australian colonies, the intimacy of homosocial

⁸³ John Horne, 'Masculinities in Politics and War in the Age of Nation-states and World Wars, 1850-1950', in Stefan Dudink, Hagemann, Karen and Tosh, John (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2004, p. 27; Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2000; Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 199; Mark Philp, 'Introduction', in Mark Philp (ed), *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, pp. 1-2.

⁸⁴ JJ Macintyre Papers Vol I, BL, MS ADD 41742, L163, L166.

⁸⁵ Adam Nicolson, *Men of Honour: Trafalgar and the Making of the English Hero*, Harper Perennial, London, 2006.

⁸⁶ John Washington Price, A Journal kept on board the Minerva Transport from Ireland to New South Wales, by J. W. Price, Surgeon, BL, ADD MS 13880.

⁸⁷ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 2*, p. 35; SG Foster, *Colonial Improver: Edward Deas Thomson 1800-1879*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1978, p. 23; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 238; James Hardy Vaux, *Memoirs of James Hardy Vaux, A Swindler and Thief*, Whittaker, Treacher, and Arnot, London, 1830, p. 133-134, 147.

environments could be characterised by disputes as much as by camaraderie. Henry Savery, Australia's first novelist, described 'a ship load of passengers' as 'another term for quarrelling, contention, and strife'. This is not what historian Malcolm D Prentis had in mind when he described shipboard experiences as a rehearsal for the diversity of life in a new land, but there is a case to be made that the 'unkind gossipings', 'petty jealousies', 'imagined affronts', 'temporary coolnesses' and 'difficulties of greater magnitude' that Edward Eyre encountered on his voyage were very much a part of Australian colonial life.⁸⁸

Contemporary commentators thought it 'curious' to find in the colonies 'men differing so entirely in birth, education, and habits, and in their whole moral and intellectual nature, thrown into such close contact, united by common interests, engaged under circumstances of perfect equality in the same pursuits, and mutually dependent on each other'.⁸⁹ Historians, like Alan Atkinson, have subsequently perpetuated the idea of a nascent egalitarianism in this circumstance of men's reliance on each other: of a solidarity among convicts; of 'manly' cooperation in the establishment of settlements; of camaraderie among the civil servants of a colonial outpost.⁹⁰ It is a common interpretation of all settler societies. While it was often the case that working together, especially under harsh frontier conditions, could create close comradeship, New Zealand historian Jock Phillips makes the important caveat that this was 'rarely a passionate and enduring friendship'.⁹¹

Some contemporary commentators, however, observed more differences than commonalities. The notion of 'respectability' was challenged in limited communities where people were thrown together by circumstance rather than choice. T Horton James thought the country 'too new for respectable families' who 'must descend a step or two' if they were to settle, but Thomas Alexander Browne⁹² thought all his neighbours were 'gentle folk'.⁹³ Servants, those visible symbols of status and

⁸⁸ Henry Savery, *The Hermit in Van Diemen's Land*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1964 (1829), p. 48; Malcolm D Prentis, 'Haggis on the High Seas: Shipboard Experiences of Scottish Emigrants to Australia, 1821-1897', *Australian Historical Studies*, 36 (124), 2004, p. 310; Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1859 (1984), p. 30.

⁸⁹ Haygarth, *Recollections*, p. 22; JJ Macintyre Papers Vol I.

⁹⁰ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 2*, pp. 138, 145-147; Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, p. 238.

⁹¹ Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male: A History*, Penguin Books, Auckland, 1987, p. 27.

⁹² Also known as novelist Rolf Boldrewood.

⁹³ T Horton James, *Six Months in Australia*; J. Cross, London, 1838, p. 110; Thomas Alexander Browne, *Our family chronicle/My Autobiography* by "Rolf Boldrewood", ML, A2132, CY705, pp. 69-70.

respectability who would have helped to identify 'gentle folk', were difficult to find among the general shortage of labour. Families whose rank would warrant domestic servants in Britain relied, therefore, on convicts.⁹⁴ Despite James' declaration of a 'universal *esprit de corps*' among convicts,⁹⁵ they were not a cohesive group, and their unsettling presence in the general society of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land was in part due to the difficulty of incorporating them into a hierarchical model of society. Crimes were committed by all classes and in the absence of suitable settlers, convicts were not only domestic help: the better educated were employed in positions of influence as clerks, teachers and newspaper editors, positions that would have announced respectability back in Britain.⁹⁶

Furthermore, most convicts served their sentences, and became free. By the 1820s ex-convicts held well over half the wealth of the colony and were masters of the same proportion of the convicts.⁹⁷ This led to a perceived division between 'emigrants', those who had arrived free, and 'emancipists', those who had arrived as convicts. But, as ship surgeon Peter Cunningham described, this division did not supercede class distinctions. 'Our society is divided into circles as in England', he wrote, 'but, from the peculiarity of its constitution, still further differences naturally exist'. Cunningham's etiology of colonial society included '*Sterling vs Currency*' (those born in Britain and those in Australia), '*Legitimates vs Illegitimates*' (those who had 'legal' reasons for visiting the colony and those free from that stigma), '*Pure Merinos*' (the purest blood in the colony, free from convict ancestry) and '*Canaries*' (recently arrived convicts who were dressed in yellow).⁹⁸ In this confusion, 'pure Merinos' might boycott balls if even the children of convicts were among the guests, while some governors, like Lachlan Macquarie, were prepared to receive emancipists at Government House.⁹⁹ Perhaps we can say with some confidence that the Australian colonies were not home to an aristocratic elite. John Macarthur, whose family made some claim to be such, was the son of a mercer and draper in Plymouth who benefited from the patronage of Lord Camden while the colonies' governmental class consisted mainly of eldest sons of

⁹⁴ Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies*, p. 53.

⁹⁵ James, *Six Months in Australia*, p. 43.

⁹⁶ John Dunmore Lang, *Transportation and Colonization; or, the causes of the comparative failure of the transportation system in the Australian colonies with suggestions for ensuring its future efficiency in subserviency to extensive colonization*, AJ Valpy, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street/Bell and Bradfute, London/Edinburgh, 1837, p. 102.

⁹⁷ Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies*, p. 81

⁹⁸ Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol. 2, p. 118.

⁹⁹ Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 149-150; Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies*, pp. 153-157.

second-generation middling families, many of whom benefited from some form of patronage, though few married money or influence.¹⁰⁰

When Judge John Thomas Bigge was appointed a special commissioner in 1819 to examine the finances, church, judiciary, and convict system of New South Wales, he made many criticisms of governor Lachlan Macquarie's expenditure on public works and management of convicts but he particularly condemned the governor's emancipist policy. The concern was unsurprising but the pettiness of some of the incidences that Bigge recorded are.¹⁰¹ The way in which the junior officers of 48th Regiment left Governor Macquarie's table before they should have in protest of emancipist assistant surgeon William Redfern's presence in the party was described in great detail in his report to the House of Commons.¹⁰²

There is no shortage of accounts of such seemingly trivial incidences in men's personal papers.¹⁰³ Sailor, settler, and explorer William Hilton Hovell took exception to a naval captain who 'would not condescend' to see him. The resulting exchange of words led to an official complaint to the 'Transport Board' and Hovell appealed to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies for the captain to substantiate his claims. Hovell also called on the Colonial Secretary for New South Wales to intervene with a hostile magistrate who insisted on hearing grievances from Hovell's convicts. The men, said Hovell, were taking advantage of the animosity: 'scarcely a week passes', wrote Hovell, 'that I am not threatened by some of them with Mr Howe, and deprived of their services for five days and a half by their actually absenting themselves on the most frivolous pretexts for this purpose'.¹⁰⁴ Surveyor George Prideaux Robert Harris was arrested in Hobart in 1808 after questioning Edward Lord's cruelty to a woman he publicly flogged. Lord – the largest stock owner in the colony, a magistrate, senior officer in Hobart, second only to lieutenant-governor David Collins, and distantly related to a baronet – told Harris that he did not have the authority to question his behaviour. Harris,

¹⁰⁰ Margaret Steven, 'Macarthur, John (1767-1834)', *ADB*, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020133b.htm>> accessed 1/7/2009; survey of biographical details of the 126 men who served as Australian governors and or executive councillors between 1788 and 1856 by RS Neale, *Class and Ideology in the Nineteenth Century*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London and Boston, 1972, pp. 118-120.

¹⁰¹ JM Bennett, 'Bigge, John Thomas (1780-1843)', *ADB*, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010093b.htm>>, accessed 21/8/2009.

¹⁰² New South Wales. Report of the commissioner of inquiry into the state of the colony of New South Wales, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1822 (448), pp. 88-90.

¹⁰³ A good example is GTWB Boyes, Hudspeth, *Hudspeth Memorial Volume*, p. 98.

¹⁰⁴ William Hilton Hovell to Henry Goulburn, 1812, (no further date given), WHH to Macleay, 5 October 1827, William Hilton Hovell Papers, 1811-1921.

however, as the deputy-surveyor and a fellow magistrate, believed he did. Support for each of the men was divided along military/civilian, rather than class, lines.¹⁰⁵

The first book of essays published in Australia illustrated this obsessive preoccupation with the finest details of behaviour. Every essay analysed and judged the look, manners and relations of the men in 1820's Van Diemen's Land.¹⁰⁶ Reputation, that 'Jewell worth reserving' that gentleman convict John Grant felt was all he had left 'to boast of', was fragile wherever a man found himself.¹⁰⁷ Governor Lachlan Macquarie made a detailed rebuttal to the House of Commons over Bigge's report. He was particularly offended by insinuations that he had used his position to increase his 'fortune by improper means'. 'This I assert, *on my honour*', he wrote, 'to be a falsehood, which, prepared as I was for their hostility, I little expected the most depraved and malignant of my enemies would have hazarded'. He was, he added, 'deeply wounded'.¹⁰⁸ In 1971, when John Ritchie published selections from the written evidence appended to Bigge's report, he noted the 'peripheral but fascinating minutiae' of personal correspondence with which Bigge was forced to deal, but chose to omit most of what he described as 'petty complaints based on personal animosities'. It is possible that Ritchie rejected much of what was significant to the men of the time.¹⁰⁹

The world is too small

The level of anxiety in men's relations is understandable but it is still startling to find those interactions related with the sort of exacting detail that we find in conduct literature. William Henty left such a record. The Henty family – prosperous Sussex sheep farmer Thomas Henty, his wife, seven sons and a daughter – used the assistance of the Duke of Richmond and Lord Surrey, as well as the services of a London legal firm, to secure legal possession of the lands they had squatted on in the

¹⁰⁵ George Prideaux Harris, Miscellaneous letters and papers, Letters and Papers of GP Harris Vol II, BL, ADD MS 45157, ER Pretyman, 'Harris, George Prideaux Robert (1775-1810)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010475b.htm>>; Thea Rienits, 'Lord, Edward (1781-1859)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020113b.htm>>; David S Macmillan, 'Paterson, William (1755-1810)', ADB <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020284b.htm>>; Linda Monks, 'Knopwood, Robert (1763-1838)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020057b.htm>> ADB, accessed 1/7/2009.

¹⁰⁶ Henry Savery, *The Hermit*.

¹⁰⁷ Cramer, *This Beauteous, Wicked Place*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁸ New South Wales. Return: copy of report, and extract of a letter of Major General Macquarie, relating to the said colony, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1828 (477), p. 9.

¹⁰⁹ John Ritchie (ed), *The Evidence to the Bigge Reports: New South Wales under Governor Macquarie. Volume 2, The Written Evidence*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1971, p. viii-xi.

Portland Bay area. Despite New South Wales governor George Gipps' declaration that those who established stations in the 'interior' were 'the real discoverers of the Country... the Pioneers of Civilization', he refused to acknowledge any claim that the Henty family made. In 1842, and after Thomas' death, negotiations were finally successful and the Colonial Office informed Gipps that the 'Messrs Henty' were to be allowed pre-emption of their lands at the price they would now realise if unimproved, and compensation for any claimed lands that had already been sold. It was therefore necessary to determine the extent of the land involved and William Henty was summoned to appear in Sydney before the Governor and Executive Council.¹¹⁰

William kept a journal during this visit and recorded every detail of words and gestures during his meetings. Gipps was imperious and officious, asking questions without allowing William to reply, bringing discussion to a halt by turning his back, addressing William without fully facing him. William on his part was aware of his subordinate position and held back from 'further speechifying' but he left Gipp's office before he was shown the door, and addressed the other men while standing, on his 'Legs', which surprised the governor. We do not know why William recorded these meetings so attentively, whether it was to impress on his brothers the appropriateness of his actions or to reassure himself. But we are left with little doubt of the significance of the minutiae of such interpersonal dealings.¹¹¹ We do know that independence, 'so delightful, and so desirable in every sense of the word', was a motivating force for his father Thomas Henty, and presumably for all his sons.¹¹² Their campaign to secure the lands they felt were theirs illustrated how uneasy was the pursuit of independence which relied on the assistance of connections, and how important was the reading, interpretation and response to the smallest of bodily gestures. Patrick Leslie summed it up in 1835 when he commented on 'the state of society' in the Australian colonies: 'first rate conduct' was needed, he wrote, and 'the smallest error in a man's conduct here, (which would be scarcely noticed at home)' would lose a man his social status.¹¹³

The emulation of 'manners', of customs, behaviour and fashions is at the core of Norbert Elias' 'civilizing process' in which manners radiated outward from the court

¹¹⁰ Marnie Bassett, *The Hentys: An Australian Colonial Tapestry*, Oxford University Press, London, 1954, pp. 329, 495-507; Miscellaneous correspondence, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS 7739, Box 119/2 (e), Box 119/3.

¹¹¹ William Henty, Journal on my visit to Sydney Dec. 1842 re Portland Bay Claims, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS 7739, 108/1 (f).

¹¹² Thomas Henty to James Street, Christmas Day 1824, Henty Papers, ML, C172, CY1572.

¹¹³ Patrick Leslie, 1835, quoted in Joanna Gordan (ed), *Advice to a Young Lady in the Colonies*, Greenhouse, Melbourne, 1979, p. 3.

into the upper class, were imitated by the next class down, and so on, necessitating further refinement in behaviour by elites to maintain their distinction.¹¹⁴ However, Ann Bermingham is one historian who suggests that topdown models of emulation are not fully adequate to explain changing culture. In understanding 'consumption of culture', argues Bermingham, we need to move beyond ideas of emulation of elites.¹¹⁵ Consumerism tends to fracture the linear model of society in which Elias' model operates. Pierre Bourdieu's articulation of habitus and the control of capital is perhaps a more helpful model. Habitus, explains Bourdieu, is not 'obedience to fixed rules', it is a practical mastery of implicit principles rather than symbolic mastery of explicit rules. Habitus is the embodiment of our social location – class, gender, ethnicity, religion, and so on – that is manifest in our appearance, our actions, our bodily bearing, manners and way of speaking, which are all properties of certain 'capital' – economic, social, cultural – that we possess. Therefore, habitus includes expectations rooted in the past which have the potential to collide with the possibilities of a changing present. Furthermore, capital is not only inherited or inculcated, it may be acquired, as conduct manuals made explicit. But acquisition often means a struggle for control over some form of capital and the arenas in which these struggles take place Bourdieu labels 'fields'.¹¹⁶ 'Fields' in the period under discussion here might include the machinery that agricultural workers destroyed in rural Britain, the streets of Port Jackson where the convict dandy strutted on his day off, memorials and depositions to the Colonial Office, and the Sydney office of the executive council that William Henty visited in 1842.

Such struggles created contradictions for men who aspired to 'independence' while living in complicated communities of family, friends, patronage and obligation which a move to the colonies could not escape. Edward Eyre never appeared conscious of the paradoxes he negotiated in his life. In Australia he would be his 'own master, free from all contracts and taking an independent position in life', and he was eventually successful though he began, 'friendless', 'alone and unsupported', with 'limited resources'. Yet Eyre arrived in Australia, like so many other men, with letters of

¹¹⁴ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1994,

¹¹⁵ Ann Bermingham, 'Introduction', in Ann Bermingham and John Brewer, (eds), *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p. 13; Klein, 'Politeness for Plebes', p. 373.

¹¹⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, 'Marriage Strategies as Strategies of Social Reproduction', in Robert Forster and Orest Ranum (eds), *Family and Society: Selections from the Annales Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1976, pp. 117-118; Greg Noble and Megan Watkins, 'So, How Did Bourdieu Learn to Play Tennis? Habitus, Consciousness and Habituation', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 17 (3/4), 2003, p. 522; Stephen Engler, 'Modern Times: Religion, Consecration and the State in Bourdieu', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 17 (3/4), 2003, p. 446, 450.

introduction. One of these nearly secured him a position in a merchant's office, but Eyre preferred to pursue the independence of sheep farming – which he was only able to do with the assistance of a new acquaintance made on the sea voyage out.¹¹⁷ The influential Jean Jacques Rousseau, on the other hand, explicitly struggled with the concept of the autonomous man embedded in community. Despite his efforts in *The Social Contract*, 1762, to outline a society in which submission to the authority of the general will guarantees that individuals will not be subordinated to the wills of others, Rousseau only allowed Émile to be a successful autonomous man once he freed himself of the roles of husband, father and citizen.¹¹⁸

Alexis de Tocqueville observed Elias' increasing chains of interdependence very clearly in America. 'As society became more stable and civilized', he wrote, 'men's relations with one another became more numerous and complicated;' the links which 'formerly bound men together' had been 'destroyed or altered' and 'new links' had been forged.¹¹⁹ The constraints of the chains of community – of obligation and reciprocity – continued to be felt even as men's assertions of independence made them harder to perceive and negotiate. The result was experienced, according to commentators like William Hazlitt, as a more confrontational society than that of previous generations.¹²⁰ But the 'great fault of the present generation', according to William Cobbett, was the inflated self-importance of all ranks. 'And yet the world is too small to hold so many *gentlemen and ladies*', he wrote.¹²¹ Even in the wide open spaces of the Australian colonies, it was a struggle for a man to find his place in life.

¹¹⁷ Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative*, pp. 1, 3-4, 33, 36-40; Geoffrey Dutton, 'Eyre, Edward John (1815-1901)', ADB <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010346b.htm>> accessed 1/7/2009.

¹¹⁸ Patrick J Deneen, *The Odyssey of Political Theory: The Politics of Departure and Return*, 2003, pp. 155-156; Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions of Jean Jacques Rousseau*. Book 1, Privately printed for the members of the Aldus Society, London, 1903 (1782), p. 65.

¹¹⁹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Harper & Row, New York, 1966, pp. 4, 383.

¹²⁰ Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, p. 214.

¹²¹ Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, p. 277.

Chapter 7:

A surprising change of circumstances – men's ambivalent relationship with authority

We are free men — Deterrent or encouragement? — Punished for ingratitude — Shackling hands that were made to be free — Polite highwaymen and gentlemen bushrangers — It is vain to fly

Many of Robinson Crusoe's adventures led to some surprising changes in circumstances, from cabin boy to plantation owner and 'from a merchant to a miserable slave' when his ship was taken by 'Turkish' pirates.¹ On the world's oceans, attacks from pirate ships were a regular hazard, though whether a crew were pirates or privateers might depend on which ship's deck you were standing.² But even with their feet firmly on land, the risks that men took when 'straining every faculty of mind and body for the improvement of their condition' made the movement between financial security and poverty, liberty and imprisonment, being on the right or wrong side of the law, very slippery. A writer could be imprisoned for publicly criticising the government's actions; a Battle of Waterloo veteran could die at the end of a cavalry sabre at a political rally; a machine-breaking Leicestershire stocking weaver could become a convict in New South Wales; a prosperous farmer in Sussex could become a squatter in the Australian colonies; a highwayman could become assistant to the Surgeon General in a remote outpost of the empire; and a convict could become one of the richest men in Sydney and count among his sons a pastoralist, a legislative councilor, a mayor and a colonial treasurer.³

¹ Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, London, 1790 (1719), pp. 20-21.

² Daniel Defoe, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, W Taylor, London, 1719, pp. 252-259.

³ Ian Dyck, 'Cobbett, William (1763-1835)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/5734>>, accessed 26/5/2010; Donald Read, *Peterloo. The 'Massacre' and its Background*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1958, p. 147; Joyce Marlow, *The Peterloo Massacre*, Rapp and Whiting, London, 1969, p. 13; George Rudé, *Protest and Punishment: The Story of the Social and Political Protesters transported to Australia 1788-1868*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978, pp. 126-127; Marnie Bassett, 'Henty, Thomas (1775-1839)', ADB, <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010493b.htm>, accessed 5/4/2009; 'Botany Bay', *The Times*, 21 June 1792, referring to assistant surgeon general D'Arcy Wentworth on Norfolk Island; DR Hainsworth, 'Lord, Simeon (1771-1840)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020114b.htm>>, accessed 25/10/2005.

The *Quarterly Review* editorial that pointed out mankind's restlessness and dissatisfaction, that had them 'straining every faculty of mind and body for the improvement of their condition', credited much of the disquiet to a diminishing deference to custom and authority: 'the public has now acquired a confidence in its own judgement', it said, 'which makes it submit with impatience to any other species of controul [sic]'. The report blamed a 'tenacious' sense of 'rights' among 'all classes of society' that prompted people to challenge the rights claimed by others.⁴ But this sense of rights was not an early nineteenth century phenomenon. Although they did not agree on either the law's substance or its purposes, Englishmen of all classes shared an awareness of the rights and liberties they had inherited from the struggles of the seventeenth century that were guaranteed by the constitution and the common law.⁵ It was an Englishman's heritage and his character was shaped by that constitution: it gave him 'vigour' and 'manliness, a 'sense of honour, and a dread of disgrace'.⁶ By the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, laws like those against poaching, and government policies such as land enclosures, had cast older behaviours outside the law and increasingly criminalised men. And the introduction of a centralised police force encroached on individual men's traditional responsibility for community law and order.

In the Australian colonies, where the first sound a man might hear when landing 'was the clanking of chains',⁷ the largest proportion of the population was made up of convicts and ex-convicts until the 1830s and many free settlers lived beyond the reaches of colonial administration. In these circumstances men's ambivalent relationship with authority and the law was brought sharply into focus. This chapter explains how transportation was continually questioned as an effective form of punishment; how the treatment of upper-class convicts and political transportees challenged notions of the inherited or earned worth of men; how convicts refused to be slaves and used their position as the colonies' labour force to establish their own versions of liberty; and, how the romanticisation of highwaymen in Britain and bushrangers in Australia revealed the extent to which men shared a perceived loss of autonomy in their relationship to authorities. The somewhat arbitrary line between the

⁴ *The Quarterly Review*. Vol XXIV. October & January, John Murray, London, 1820-1821, p. 195.

⁵ David Lemmings, 'Law', in Iain McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 74.

⁶ *Dialogues on the Rights of Britons, between a Farmer, a Sailor, and a Manufacturer*, T Longman, etc., London, 1792, pp. 20-21.

⁷ John Webster, *Reminiscences of an Old Settler in Australian and New Zealand*, Southern Bookbinding, New Zealand, 1908, pp. 55-56.

right and wrong sides of the law was particularly blurred in the Australian colonies where surprising changes of circumstances turned settlers into illegal squatters and ex-convicts into useful citizens. Defoe believed that an honest man would never run into 'Extremes and Excesses on one Hand or the other' but his vision of 'simple and plain' honesty was difficult to realise when faced with the shifting lines of the law.⁸

We are free men

The 'rule of law' was an inclusive and participatory ideal in British society, and the egalitarian implications of common law were sometimes used to justify direct popular action. However, the 'ideal' was, by and large, just an ideal. Lower class men who had believed that the rule of law and the ancient constitution guaranteed their rights as freeborn Britons were confronted with their actual relation to the law during the political agitation of the early nineteenth century. Percy Shelley, writing after Peterloo, saw the Englishman's birthright as 'Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay'.⁹ Notions of liberty and freedom, however, were invoked throughout this period of change to justify and explain a range of behaviours. Aristocrats believed that the 'manly amusement of fox-hunting' was 'one of the strongest preservatives of that national spirit by which we are led to cherish, above all things, a life of active energy, independence, and freedom'.¹⁰ Homosocial gatherings enabled a 'freedom of discourse' that men were unable to achieve in the company of women.¹¹ An apparent lack of lower class people willing to be servants was explained by their preference for 'the liberty and freedom of working in the fields to the restraint of gentlemen's houses'.¹² When reprimanded, men spending their wages on drink would reply, 'We are free men, and it is our own: we have paid for it, and have a right to do as we please with it'.¹³ Convicts on their way to the Australian colonies wrote in their letters of 'hope of getting their freedom, farms given them & liberty to follow their different trades &

⁸ Daniel Defoe, *Serious Reflections During the Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe: With His Vision of the Angelick World. Written by Himself*, W Taylor, London, 1720, p. 68.

⁹ Lemmings, 'Law', p. 74; HT Dickinson, 'Democracy', in Iain McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 36, 78, 81.

¹⁰ John E Eardley-Wilmot, *Reminiscences of the Late Thomas Assheton Smith, Esq. Or, The Pursuits of An English Gentleman*, Routledge, Warne & Routledge, London, 1862, p. 2.

¹¹ Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, p. 244.

¹² Ella Wyndham to George and Margaret Wyndham, 20 December 1844, Extracts from Dinton-Dalwood letters, 1827-1853, ML, MSS 1657, CY 3815.

¹³ James Backhouse, *A Narrative of A Visit to the Australian Colonies*, Hamilton, Adams and Co, London, 1843, p. 2.

professions when they arrive there'.¹⁴ Writers of literature promoting emigration made the 'bush' of the colonies almost synonymous with freedom: 'glorious freedom', 'absolute freedom', freedom from 'anxiety' and 'care'.¹⁵ And freedom from tyranny and despotism was claimed to be essential in ensuring a country's wealth.¹⁶

These invocations reflect one of the central concerns of Republican thinking: that the progress of culture and civilisation always entailed some loss of freedom, coloured by a Rousseauian response to society as tainted, corrupting, and shackling.¹⁷ Certainly the criminal justice system, in which men were increasingly expected to exercise a greater degree of self-control than ever before, seemed to bear this out. Historian Martin Wiener identifies what he calls an increasing 'criminalisation' of men. As more crimes against the person were defined and prosecuted, and as the severity of punishment, in crimes against property as well as against the person, came to depend upon the degree of personal violence or threat involved, it was increasing numbers of men who were prosecuted and punished. Between 1805 and 1842, the total prosecutions of females at assizes and quarter sessions rose four times, from 1,338 to 5,569, which, as Wiener points out, certainly seems large, but in the same period prosecutions of males rose eight times, from 3,267 to 25,740. The rates of prosecution slowed markedly after this time and later in the century reversed, but the gender trend continued.¹⁸

Coterminous with this increasing intolerance of interpersonal violence and expectations of self-control was a move to a centralised police force. The English gentry had long resisted the creation of a professional police system – they associated the prospect with tyranny and curtailment of 'manly' independence¹⁹ – and parliamentary

¹⁴ John Washington Price, *A Journal kept on board the Minerva Transport from Ireland to New South Wales*, by J. W. Price, Surgeon, BL, ADD MS 13880, pp. 9-10.

¹⁵ Review of *Three Years' Practical Experience of a Settler in New South Wales*, in *Caledonian Mercury*, 27 August 1838; Anon, *A Month in the Bush of Australia*, J Cross; Simpkin and Marshall, London, 1838, p. 19; Henry William Haygarth, *Recollections of Bush Life in Australia, During a Residence of Eight Years in the Interior*, John Murray, London, 1848, p. 21; Alexander Marjoribanks, *Travels in New South Wales*, Smith, Elder and Co, London, 1847, p. 36.

¹⁶ WC Wentworth, *Statistical, Historical, and Political Description of The Colony of New South Wales*, G and W B Whittaker, London, 1978 (1819), p. 88.

¹⁷ JGA Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1985, pp. 147-148; Peter Jimack, *Rousseau: Émile*, Grant & Cutler, London, 1983, p. 72.

¹⁸ Martin J Wiener, 'The Victorian Criminalization of Men', in Peter Spierenburg (ed), *Men and Violence: Gender, Honor, and Rituals in Modern Europe and America*, Ohio State University, Ohio, 1998, pp. 206, 209.

¹⁹ GJ Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992, p. 80; 'An Englishman's house is to be considered as his castle', *The Times*, 4 August 1788.

committees in 1816, 1818 and 1822 continued to reject a centralised police force as 'incompatible with British liberty'.²⁰ Before a large and centralised police force was in existence, men cooperated in forms of community policing, such as London's 'Committee of the Society for the Prosecution of Felons, Cheats, &c'. established in 1767 and still in 1795 'continued and conducted with great spirit on every occasion that has presented an opportunity of bringing offenders to justice'.²¹ A similar spirit moved the writer of a letter to the editor of *The Sydney Gazette* in 1834 suggesting that farmers in the Hunter valley arm themselves and assist police in hunting down the latest group of bushrangers.²² Armed individuals often retaliated if threatened as newspaper reports of the activities of highwaymen often mentioned.²³ So did surgeon John Price, when on the way to join his ship to the Australian colonies in 1798 he was halted by 'armed banditti:' 'I immediately let down the front window of the carriage', he wrote in his journal, '& presented a case of pistols at him & swore if he dare to stop I should put an instant period to his existence'.²⁴

Peel was finally successful with his Metropolitan Police Bill in April 1829 and by May 1830, the Metropolitan Police was a force of 3,300, as compared to the 450 full-time officers in London in 1828.²⁵ The replacement of the citizen-soldier with a paid soldiery for maintaining internal law and order furthered the state's monopolisation of violence – one of the stages Norbert Elias notes in his 'civilizing process'.²⁶ This move ended the rights of crime victims to apprehend culprits before contacting a constable or a justice of the peace, and ended the legal obligation for witnesses to a felony to apprehend the perpetrator, or those who had heard of a crime to notify a constable or justice of the peace. People were no longer required to join the 'hue and cry' in pursuit of a felon if summoned by a constable.²⁷ The passing of Peel's Police Bill was thus a closing chapter in the sense of individual responsibility for law enforcement which had been eroded over the eighteenth century as increasing numbers of men were paid to carry

²⁰ TA Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*, Patterson Smith, Montclair, New Jersey, 1972, p. 46; David Philips, 'Policing', in Iain McCalman (ed), *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 69; 'On the subject of Mr. PEEL'S Police Bill', *The Times*, 23 April 1829.

²¹ Letter to the Editor, *The Times*, 7 September 1795.

²² *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 19 July 1834.

²³ For example, *The Times*, 14 June 1788.

²⁴ Price, Journal, p. 1; see also *The Times*, 14 June 1788, 23 April 1790.

²⁵ Critchley, *A History of Police*, pp. 38, 45, 51, 52, 54.

²⁶ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1994.

²⁷ The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913, <<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Policing.jsp>>, accessed 28/5/2010.

out the task. Although there had been three-quarters of a century of suspicion and hostility towards the whole idea of professional police, the Act was passed without opposition and scarcely any debate.²⁸ This was very little fanfare for a move with profound consequences for men.

Throughout these changes and beyond, however, both faith in the 'rule of law' and individual liberty guaranteed by the constitution continued to be expressed in words and actions, even at the edges of the empire. Within weeks of the arrival of the First Fleet at Port Jackson, a criminal court had been convened whose members included three senior naval officers and three military officers presided over by a judge-advocate. Oaths were administered, accusations read, defence heard and sentences passed by a vote of the members. Five of the seven had to concur in order to pass a sentence of death.²⁹

Despite the formality and institutional apparatus of courts of law, they were popularly seen as forums for dispute resolution between individuals. This perception was reinforced by the published proceedings of the Old Bailey which tended to ignore the presence of lawyers and leave out the judges' summaries in order to present trials as confrontations between the victim and the accused.³⁰ Robert Forsythe understood what was happening here: 'If men do not get their complaints listened to, and justice done in a way that seems to themselves, or their neighbours, satisfactory', he told the commissioners enquiring into law court processes in Scotland, 'the peace of the community is undermined, and angry passions fostered'. Litigation was, therefore, a 'remedy', a 'physic', a 'cooling phlebotomy' for the 'passions' that 'exist in every age', for which there were no permanent means of confinement.³¹ Litigation was a safety valve for men whose individual responsibility for law enforcement had been curtailed.

²⁸ Critchley, *A History of Police*, pp. 49-50

²⁹ Excerpts from Lieutenant King's journal in John Hunter, *An Historical Journal of Events at Sydney and at Sea 1787-1792 by Captain John Hunter*, Angus & Robertson in association with the Royal Australian Historical Society, Sydney, 1793 (1968), pp. 200-201; Tim Flannery (ed), *1788 Watkin Tench, Comprising A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay and A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, Text Publishing Company, Melbourne, 1996, pp. 47-50.

³⁰ The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913

³¹ Appeals, Scotland. Report of the commissioners appointed by His Majesty's warrant of the 29th July 1823, for inquiring into the forms of process in the courts of law in Scotland, and the course of appeals from the Court of Session to the House of Lords: together with an appendix, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1824 (241) p. 141.

Deterrent or encouragement?

While individual men's role in the law enforcement was eroded, active public participation in punishment, at hangings and whippings and standing in the pillory for instance, was also being replaced. The Transportation Act of 1718 was one such move that isolated offenders from the community. This was a clear break with common law ideals and traditions.³² The 1832 Reform Act, according to historian David Lemmings, was also part of this process, with subsequent parliamentary reform giving the legislature 'the entire mantle of popular legitimacy:' the Act 'symbolized the lengthy and complex process by which law and government were becoming merely representative of the community rather than legitimating individual participation in the name of the rights of freeborn Englishmen under the common law'. This participation, says Lemmings, was rendered 'dangerous' by the radicalism of the eighteenth century, and 'impracticable' by social developments in the early-nineteenth-century.³³ Such changes were not uncontested. Whether transportation was actually a 'punishment', for example, was a matter of dispute long before the first convicts left for the Australian colonies and debate and controversy over the issue was integral to the Australian colonies' development until transportation was discontinued in the 1860s.

Hydrographer Alexander Dalrymple claimed from the outset in 1786 that 'Botany Bay' would be an encouragement, not a deterrent, to criminals who would 'be sent, at the Publick Expence, to a good Country and temperate Climate, where they will be their own Masters' and this sentiment was repeated in 1837 by colonial landowner James Mudie.³⁴ That New South Wales might be more of a settlement than a gaol was a concern for the Select Committee on Finance in 1798. 'The more thriving the Settlement, the more frequented; the more frequented, the less the difficulty of return; the more thriving too, the less terrible', the report writers mused, so that for some transportees the colony would 'lose its terrors altogether'. In this light, transportation became a form of emigration which may for some remain 'a punishment' but 'to others it may become an adventure', and this was troubling because 'a punishment should be

³² Lemmings, 'Law', p. 79.

³³ Ibid., p. 81.

³⁴ Quoted in George Mackaness, *Alexander Dalrymple's "A Serious Admonition to the Public on the Intended Thief Colony at Botany Bay" With A Memoir*, Reprint edition, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1943 (1979), p. 24; Andrew S Cook, 'Dalrymple, Alexander (1737–1808)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/7044>>, accessed 4/6/2010; James Mudie, *The Felonry of New South Wales: Being a Faithful Picture of the Real Romance of Life in Botany Bay*, Whaley ad Co, London, 1837, p. 1.

the same thing to all persons, and at all times'.³⁵ The commissioner of inquiry into the state of the colony of New South Wales in 1822 reported similarly that convicts transported for seven years, especially those who had not formed hard criminal habits, might become good settlers and for them 'it must be admitted that the prospect afforded by transportation to New South Wales, is more one of emigration than of punishment'.³⁶ The situation was a quandary for the government's financial managers as successful settlers cost the government less than convicts.³⁷

In 1802, philosopher and reformer Jeremy Bentham used the example of New South Wales to promote the distinctive benefits of surveillance in his proposed penitentiary building, the panopticon. New South Wales, wrote Bentham, did not achieve the main aims of 'punishment'. In removing the convicted 'out of view' their fate did not act as an example and deterrent. Nor did Bentham place much confidence in the potential for 'field husbandry' to reform: he believed that reformation could only take place under strict inspection, much as a child is brought to adulthood. The temperance, 'religious exercise' and 'profitable employment' that Bentham thought necessary for reformation could only be secured under the surveillance of the panopticon. In fact, 'incapacitation', that is rendering a man incapable of committing further offences was, according to Bentham, only achieved in the colony by a sleight of hand, in that further offences committed in New South Wales could be considered as not having been committed in Britain – a case of out-of-sight, out-of-mind. Lastly, Bentham's calculations showed that transportation to New South Wales was the more costly option.³⁸

The 1812 Report from the Select Committee on Transportation gave a more complex view of the Australian colonies' operation as a penal settlement and expressed more hope in their reforming potential, especially regarding 'field husbandry'. Convicts assigned to settlers, especially those on remoter properties, were removed from their former companions and the 'inducements to vice' offered by towns, and encouraged 'into habits of industry and regularity' as well as acquiring farming skills which would be useful after the expiration of their sentence. Time expired convicts were free to return

³⁵ Twenty-Eighth Report from the Select Committee on Finance, &c. Police, including convict establishments, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1810 (348), pp. 351-352.

³⁶ New South Wales. Report of the commissioner of inquiry into the state of the colony of New South Wales', House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1822 (448) p. 103.

³⁷ Twenty-Eighth Report from the Select Committee on Finance, pp. 351-352.

³⁸ Jeremy Bentham, 'Panopticon versus New South Wales: Or, The Panopticon Penitentiary System, and the Penal Colonization System, Compared. In a Letter addressed to the Right Honourable Lord Pelham', *The Works of Jeremy Bentham, Published Under the Superintendence of His Executor, John Bowring*, William Tait, Edinburgh, 1843 (1802), pp. 174-175, 183, 194, 201-204.

to Britain or they could settle with a grant of land and eighteen months victuals from the government stores. 'In this manner', wrote the authors of the report, 'they have an opportunity of establishing themselves in independence, and by proper conduct to regain a respectable place in society; and such instances Your Committee are glad to learn, are not unfrequent [sic]'.³⁹

Royal Commissioner John Thomas Bigge, in 1822, agreed on the limited reformatory prospects of convicts employed in towns where the 'habits of luxurious indulgence' that they acquired during their sentence rendered them 'permanently depraved and licentious' in their emancipation. But Bigge was sceptical about the possibilities for reform at all.⁴⁰ Politician and philanthropist Thomas Fowell Buxton, in his enquiry into prison discipline in 1818, also advocated the 'morally regenerative' value of 'honest labour' that imparted skills that would be useful when men left prisons; 'idleness' would only increase 'depravity'. However, Buxton did not see any place for cruelty in prisons which he felt only led to further injustice: if the law enforced a jail sentence and did not stipulate particular treatment during that time, incarceration was sufficient punishment. 'This is the whole of his sentence', wrote Buxton, 'and ought therefore to be the whole of his suffering'.⁴¹

Similarly divided views were expressed in debates about incarceration, transportation, punishment and reformation into the 1830s. From Van Diemen's Land, lieutenant-governor George Arthur acknowledged that connections between convicts and their 'friends' in England were not 'broken' leading to a belief that the 'mere act of transportation' was 'no longer a punishment at all dreaded at home'. However, he thought that transportation was felt as a punishment by those subjected ('Nothing compensates for the loss of liberty'), and he was optimistic about its reformatory effects. The men in Downing Street did not agree. Colonial secretary Edward Stanley told Arthur that his arguments would have little effect on criminals when they contemplated 'the comparative ease and freedom from restraint' enjoyed by their

³⁹ Report from the Select Committee on Transportation, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1812 (341), pp. 11-12, 13.

⁴⁰ JT Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner into the State of the Colony of New South Wales*, London, 1822, p. 48.

⁴¹ Thomas Fowell Buxton, *An Inquiry, Whether Crime and Misery are Produced or Prevented, By Our Present System of Prison Discipline*, London, 1818, pp. 6-7, 127, 141; 'State of the Prisons', *The Times*, 23 March 1818.

convicted associates assigned to settlers. Stanley wanted severer treatment of convicts as a deterrent to their 'companions in crime' at home.⁴²

The evidence for this belief that transportation to the Australian colonies was not a deterrent was mainly anecdotal, but it was pervasive. George Thomas told the commissioners enquiring into the administration of the Poor Laws in 1834 that he had overheard one of his labourers in the stable say, 'if he could once get out of this beggarly country, he should be rich without working half his time, and that if other means failed, he would commit some slight offence in order to get sent out to Van Diemen's Land, where all were gentlemen'. Thomas had persuaded the labourer of his folly by reading him a letter 'written by a convict to his friends in London, describing the horrors of his situation and the agony of his feelings, both mental and bodily'. But criminal Snowden Dunhill said, through the words of the ghost writer of his memoirs, that he 'had heard much of the easy lives led by convicts in New South Wales' and with members of his family already there, he 'felt impelled to make an endeavour to join them'. And penal reformers regularly cited letters from convicts urging their friends and families to join them and recounted cases of criminals asking to be transported or committing crimes solely in order to be sent to the Australian colonies.⁴³

Punished for ingratitude

Complicating the question of whether transportation and the subsequent treatment of convicts was actually a punishment was the diversity of the convict population. Even the highly critical landowner James Mudie acknowledged that there was 'no species, either of labour or enterprise' that could not be found among the convicts.⁴⁴ Along with the thieves, swindlers, and highwaymen transported to the Australian colonies were

⁴² Lieutenant-Governor Arthur to Viscount Howick, 18 February 1832, Lieutenant-Governor Arthur to RW Hay, 25 July 1832, Lieutenant-Governor Arthur to Viscount Goderich, 8 February 1833, Secretary Stanley to Lieutenant-Governor Arthur, Downing Street, 26 August 1833, Report from the Select Committee on Transportation; together with the minutes of evidence, appendix, and index, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1837 (518), pp. 3, 8, 17-18, 22-24.

⁴³ Report from His Majesty's commissioners for inquiring into the administration and practical operation of the Poor Laws, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1834 (44), Appendix C, p. 449c; Snowden Dunhill, *The Life of Snowden Dunhill of Spaldington, East Riding (1766-1838). A Reprint of the Abridged Life of Snowden Dunhill*, Mr Pye (Books), Howden, 1987 (c1835), p. 22; John B Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies: A History of Early New South Wales*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1983, p. 20; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 57; Patrick O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia 1825-1929*, New South Wales University Press and Ulster Historical Foundation, Sydney and Belfast, 1984, pp. 10-18; 'What is to be done with our Criminals?' *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 86 (173), July, 1847, p. 232.

⁴⁴ James Mudie, *The Felonry of New South Wales*, p. 329-220.

machine-breakers, radicals and Chartists, whose crimes were aroused by social injustice and calls for political reform, as well as what Edward Gibbon Wakefield called the 'uneasy class', lesser professionals and under-employed literate men (attorneys, merchants, surveyors, surgeons, military officers, clergymen, and clerks) who lived on restricted incomes, and were prone to the seemingly new 'crimes of fraud and craft which characterise the advanced age of society'.⁴⁵ There were also upper-class men whose money and privilege had not averted their transportation. Attitudes to, and changing treatment of, these more educated convicts, called 'specials' after the late 1820s, reflected tensions about the basis for a man's worth: did a man's birth, warrant more, or less, censure of his actions? And such men were a reminder of just how easily any man could move across that changing line to the other side of the law.⁴⁶

Political agitation erupted frequently during the period of this study: radicalism in the London Corresponding Society and northern Constitutional Societies in 'that tense and sedition-conscious decade' of the 1790s;⁴⁷ calls for universal suffrage and annual parliaments from the Hampden Clubs of 1816 and 1817 that led to the March of the Blanketeers from Manchester in 1817 and the disastrous Peterloo meeting in 1819; naval mutinies, Luddite machine-breaking, Swing protesters and Chartist burnings across the country at various times.⁴⁸ The American Revolution, the French Revolution, Corn Laws, Poor Laws, dismal harvests, war and post-war economic depression and industrial expansion, all contributed to displaced and discontented men who were inspired, motivated and justified by what they read, or heard had been written. Constitutional Societies in the 1790s resolved that Thomas Paine's plans be 'speedily carried into Effect', and parliamentary evidence on the operations of the Poor Laws in 1834 blamed that decade's 'Tumults and Burnings' on 'the villainy of the press, Messrs. Carlisle, Cobbett, Taylor, &c. who are read in every Country pothouse'.⁴⁹ Chartists

⁴⁵ *England and America*, in MF Lloyd Prichard (ed), *The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, Collins, Glasgow and London, 1968, p. 355; Lisa Christine Jenkins, *Offending Lives: Subjectivity and Australian Convict Autobiographies, 1788-1899*, PhD, Stanford University, 2002, ML, MSS 7107, p. 302; *The Times*, 28 August 1849.

⁴⁶ David Andrew Roberts, "'The valley of Swells': "Special" or "Educated" Convicts on the Wellington Valley Settlement, 1827-1830', *History Australia*, vol. 3 (1), 2006, p. 11.2; Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 303.

⁴⁷ Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London*, Walker & Company, New York, 2006, pp. 483, 487.

⁴⁸ Donald Read, *Press and People 1790-1850: Opinion in Three English Cities*, Edward Arnold, London, 1961, pp. 46-47; Jeffrey D Glasco, "'The Seaman Feels Him-self a Man'", *International Labour and Working-Class History*, vol. 66, Fall, 2004, pp. 40-56.

⁴⁹ Appendix To The Second Report from the Committee of Secrecy. Corresponding Societies, Defence &c, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1794, p. 10; Report from His Majesty's commissioners for inquiring into the administration and practical operation of the Poor Laws, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1834 (44), Evidence of Henry Wenham Newman, Appendix B, p. 192e; Philip Sydney Pierrepont, Appendix B, p. 334c; William Coleman and Thomas Abell, appendix B, p. 494c;

were influenced by Thomas Spence, that Newcastle netmaker and schoolteacher who outlined his plans for land reforms in the guise of a utopian society in *A Supplement to the History of Robinson Crusoe*, 1782.⁵⁰ As we have seen, men thought such potential existed in the Australian colonies. Absalom Watkin, cotton merchant and prominent Manchester citizen, one of the authors of the 'Protest against the Conduct of the Yeomanry at Peterloo' and a member of the Council of the Anti-Corn Law League, confided to his diary in April 1839, 'Would that I had gone to Australia'.⁵¹

Historian George Rudé has estimated that around 3,600 'political' prisoners were sent to Australia, which is about one in forty-five of all transported convicts (120 of them were women).⁵² Among these were: the Scottish Martyrs (Thomas Muir, Thomas Fyshe Palmer, William Skirving, Maurice Margarot and Joseph Gerrald) transported for seditious activities in the 1790s; William Redfern a surgeon on *HMS Standard* during the mutiny of the Fleet at the Nore in 1797 and transported to New South Wales in 1801; brothers Joseph and Robert Mason, transported for their involvement in the Swing protests in 1830; George Loveless, a 'Tolpuddle martyr', transported in 1834 for binding members of his Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers with 'unlawful oaths;' and Chartist John Frost transported for leading an armed uprising in 1839.⁵³

Judge Roger Therry described machine-breakers from Dorsetshire, transported in the early 1830s as 'generally as well-conducted men as emigrants of the same rank of life',⁵⁴ and a similar comparison could be made of some of the higher-profile transportees mentioned above. Palmer, a Cambridge graduate and Unitarian minister, established one of the first trading and shipbuilding concerns in the colony. Skirving, the university-educated son of a farmer, was allotted a small house and allowed to

William Baillee, p. 498c; TP Hilder, p. 503c, John Clie Appendix B, p. 506e; George Fellows, Appendix C., p. 503c; Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 240.

⁵⁰ Thomas Spence, *A s'upl'im'int too thæi Hæistæire ov Robæinsæin Kruzo, bæeing th'i h'ist'ire 'ov Kruzonea, or R'ob'ins'in Kruzo'z il'ind*, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1782; Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, Yale University Press, London, 2001, p. 108.

⁵¹ Magdalen Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993, pp. xi-xii, 204.

⁵² Rudé, *Protest and Punishment*, pp. 9-10.

⁵³ John Earnshaw, 'Muir, Thomas (1765-1799)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020231b.htm>>; Edward Ford, 'Redfern, William (1774-1833)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020324b.htm>>; G Rudé, 'Loveless, George (1797-1874)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020116b.htm>>; G Rudé, 'Frost, John (1784-1877)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010385b.htm>>, ADB, accessed 31/5/2010; Ian Dyck, 'Mason, Joseph (b. 1799?)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2007 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/48761>>, accessed 31/5/2010.

⁵⁴ R Therry, *Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Residence in New South Wales and Victoria, etc*, Sampson Low, London, 1863, p. 24.

purchase a farm of about 100 acres. The educated Redfern was appointed assistant surgeon at Norfolk Island in 1802 and given a free pardon in 1803. In addition to his work in Sydney's hospital wards, he conducted a daily out-patient clinic for convicts and had the most extensive private practice in the colony, as well as successful agricultural activities in vines, wool and cattle, and an Edinburgh-educated son. Loveless, a Dorsetshire labourer, worked as shepherd and stock-keeper in Van Diemen's Land where his character and qualities were appreciated by lieutenant-governor George Arthur. Frost, a prosperous tradesman and local magistrate in Wales, worked as a clerk and a schoolmaster in Van Diemen's Land, where he was commended for being 'studious, quiet and obedient'. The Mason brothers were farm labourers, educated by their schoolteacher mother. Both were assigned on their arrival in New South Wales and Joseph wrote home about the fair wages and good food that he received. It was Joseph's view that his material life in Australia was superior to that of his friends and fellow workers in Hampshire.⁵⁵

In the early decades of the Australian colonies, when there was no alternative, 'specials' filled essential professional posts. The 'very ingenious, useful, and well behaved man' who held the post of government storekeeper, cut stamps for the issue of government bills and supervised the building of Collin's house, was James Grove, transported for engraving a set of plates to counterfeit bank notes. Three of Sydney's first business entrepreneurs with interests in boat-building, sealing, whaling, and trading – Simeon Lord, Henry Kable and James Underwood – were transported for instances of theft and burglary. The designer of some of New South Wales' finest buildings was Francis Greenway, an architect transported for forgery. And the author of the first novel published in Australia was Henry Savery, a Bristol manufacturer and son of a banker, who was transported for forging fictitious bills to cover commitments he made which were beyond his firm's resources.⁵⁶ These men benefited from freedoms not offered to convicts from the lower classes; the result of a mixture of the respect that

⁵⁵ Earnshaw, 'Palmer'; Earnshaw, 'Skirving'; Ford, 'Redfern'; G Rudé, 'Loveless'; G Rudé, 'Frost'; Dyck, 'Mason'; Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 264.

⁵⁶ Lieutenant-Colonel David Collins quoted in John Earnshaw, 'Grove, James (1769-1810)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010446b.htm>>; DR Hainsworth, 'Lord, Simeon (1771-1840)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020114b.htm>>; DR Hainsworth, 'Kable, Henry (1763-1846)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020028b.htm>>; DR Hainsworth, 'Underwood, James (1771-1844)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020498b.htm>>; Morton Herman, 'Greenway, Francis (1777-1837)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010434b.htm>>; ADB, accessed 2/6/2010; Cecil Hadgraft, 'Savery, Henry (1791-1842)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020376b.htm>>, accessed 31/5/2010.

their class commanded 'even in a state of punishment',⁵⁷ and the pragmatic need of colonial administrators for their literary, numeracy, and professional skills.

In dress and behaviour, educated convicts were visibly unlike other convicts and undifferentiated from free emigrants. This aspect of 'specials' raised similar anxieties over authenticity and duplicity to those we saw in chapter six. As Captain Robert Smith said of artist Thomas Watling whom he was transporting in 1789: '[he] was Accused of forgery which from his behaviour since he Came on board I believe to be false:' it was difficult to perceive that a man who acted as a gentleman could possibly be so ungentlemanly as to commit a crime.⁵⁸ But if a forger designed Sydney's public buildings, or an extortionist-lawyer wrote official verse for the governor, or a spy-cum-gambler helped map the territories claimed by the Van Diemen's Land Company, what standing did this give the colonies as a whole? It is no wonder that 'specials' made those around them 'uneasy': they blurred the boundaries, and confounded the expectations, of legality, criminality, respectability and class.⁵⁹

During the 1820s, however, treatment of special convicts hardened.⁶⁰ As James F O'Connell, a visitor to New South Wales in the 1820s, described it, because 'transgression from low rogues' was expected, many 'lighter peccadilloes' were 'winked at'. On the other hand, special convicts were seen to be abusing the privileges extended to them, and in being 'more rigorously punished than common convicts' they were being 'punished for ingratitude, as well as the bare infraction of the law'.⁶¹ The changes were driven, in part, by debates in Britain on the relative efficacies of capital punishment, imprisonment and transportation and an emerging demand for greater equality and severity in the transportation experience. Also of influence was a growing acceptance that a man's worth depended more on his own efforts than on inherited rank or property: in this paradigm the redemption of a man fallen from the grace of social status was harder to earn than for a man who had never known that privilege.⁶²

⁵⁷ JT Bigge quoted in Roberts, 'The valley of swells', p. 11.3.

⁵⁸ Captain Robert Smith to Peter Crewden, 5 July 1789, PRO, quoted in Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 307.

⁵⁹ Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, pp. 303, 305.

⁶⁰ Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 303; Roberts, 'The valley of swells', p. 11.1.

⁶¹ James F O'Connell, *A Residence of Eleven Years in New Holland and the Caroline Islands*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1972, p. 76.

⁶² Roberts, 'The valley of swells', pp. 11.3, 11.15.

Shackling hands that were made to be free

The views in debates over punishment, transportation and treatment of convicts, were coloured by the moral imperatives of concurrent debates on slavery. Buxton was an anti-slavery activist and Arthur explicitly conflated convicts and slaves: 'the condition of a convict in no respect differs from that of a slave', he wrote to Viscount Goderich.⁶³ Although it was also argued that the condition of convicts was more 'analogous to the property a master has in his apprentice',⁶⁴ convicts themselves took up the refrains of the anti-slavery arguments, some heard to declare it better to die than live in a state of bondage.⁶⁵ Shackling was the very visible condition that did most to conflate the position of convict and slave. As New South Wales supreme court chief justice Francis Forbes observed 'there is something in Convictism, like Slavery, corrupting to the mind: when we fasten a chain round the leg of a prisoner, and place it in the hand of a Settler, we in effect bind two men in fetters; the one becomes a Tyrant, the other a Slave'.⁶⁶

This use of chains to symbolise the shackling of liberty by tyranny had been used from the time of the American and French Revolutions, and shackling, says scholar Lisa Jenkins, was 'particularly distressing to special convicts, who must have been aware of the period's complicated iconography of enchainment'.⁶⁷ While Britons were exhorted to 'Spurn... the shameless decree, Which still shackles the hands that were made to be free', commentators in New South Wales observed the 'BRAVE IRON'D-MEN, Who spurn at their masters, but smile on the chain!'⁶⁸ Incarceration and shackling were

⁶³ Olwyn Mary Blouet, 'Buxton, Sir Thomas Fowell, first baronet (1786–1845)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, May 2010 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/4247>>, accessed 4/6/2010; Lieutenant-Governor Arthur to Viscount Goderich, 8 February 1833, Report from the Select Committee on Transportation; together with the minutes of evidence, appendix, and index, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1837 (518), p. 22.

⁶⁴ New South Wales, &c. (Crown lands and emigration.) Return to an address to His Majesty, dated 14 September 1831;—for, copies of the royal instructions to the Governors of New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, and Western Australia, as to the mode to be adopted in disposing of Crown lands; together with such parts of any despatches addressed to them as relate to the same subject, or to the means by which emigration may be facilitated, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1831 (328), p. 8.

⁶⁵ Price, Journal, p. 44.

⁶⁶ Francis Forbes to Wilmot Horton, 26 November 1825, Catton Papers, Australian Joint Copying Project, Reel M791, quoted in 'Decisions of the Superior Courts of New South Wales', <<http://www.law.mq.edu.au/scnsw/>>.

⁶⁷ Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 334.

⁶⁸ *The Modern Songster; Containing All The Favorite Songs, Now Sung At Public Places, Convivial meetings, &c &c. To Which Are Added Toasts and Sentiments*, Brook and Lancashine, Huddersfield, 1804, pp. 72-73; *Sydney Monitor*, 10 September 1834, quoted in Erin Ihde, 'Bold, Manly-Minded Men' and 'Sly, Cunning Base Convicts': The Double Standard of Escape', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 7, 2005, p. 137.

emasculating, constraining men who by their very nature were meant to be active. As convict John Leonard said of the lieutenant who organised his transfer out of a brutal work gang, 'he has made a man of me again'.⁶⁹

Whether we take Jason Haslam and Julia M Wright's position that the 'reliance of the imperial project' on convict labour in Australia is a 'suggestive parallel to early America's reliance on slave labour to consolidate economic and territorial power', or whether we side with Alan Atkinson who emphasises the more humanitarian aims of European settlement in the Australian colonies, it was the case that convicts constituted the majority of the population and were the colonies' primary source of labour as they served out their sentences.⁷⁰ It was recognised by proponents of transportation like lieutenant-governor George Arthur and commentators on the convict system like newspaper editor Edward Smith Hall, that convicts were the labour force without which the Australian colonies would not function.⁷¹ Convicts did not see themselves as slaves and understood the value of their labour. One of the greatest difficulties mentioned in all forms of records from this period was that of getting convicts to work productively, either 'for the advancement of public improvements', or for individual settlers as farmhands, stock-keepers or domestic servants.⁷²

Incentives – such as pardons for volunteering and completing heavy road works, or opportunities to sell their labour to settlers after their public works were done for the day⁷³ – to the pervasive use of flogging (despite reservations among numerous individual men about this practice⁷⁴) were used in efforts to make convicts productive. In response, convicts protested against cruel punishments and insisted on basic rights like sufficient rations.⁷⁵ Despite day's of travel between pastoral properties and the nearest courts, insubordinate convict labourers appeared regularly in front of magistrates on charges of indecent or improper conduct, disobedience, insolence, neglect of duty and pilfering. The two most common charges were drunkenness and

⁶⁹ Quoted in Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 58.

⁷⁰ Jason Haslam and Julia M Wright (eds), *Captivating Subjects: Writing Confinement, Citizenship, and Nationhood in the Nineteenth Century*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2005, p. 8; Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 1*, p. 258.

⁷¹ Ihde, 'Bold, Manly-Minded Men', p. 124.

⁷² *The Sydney Herald*, 5 September 1833.

⁷³ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 10 June 1815; *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 14 January 1825.

⁷⁴ Peter Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales; A Series of Letters, comprising Sketches of the Actual State of Society in That Colony; Of its Peculiar Advantages to Emigrants; Of its Topography, Natural History, &c.* &c, vol. 2, Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1827 (1966), p. 261; Therry, *Reminiscences*, p. 50.

⁷⁵ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 1 June 1827; Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 196.

absence without leave, absences being most commonly used to purchase alcohol.⁷⁶ Such escapes were, says historian David Roberts, 'a fleeting experience, and', he says, 'the reasons for it were diverse, personal, and highly dependent on the vagaries of need and opportunity'. Whether it was an act of defiance, a measure of self-preservation, a mere breather, recreation, adventure or illicit errand, it was 'customary behaviour for convicts, a measurement of their freedom in an "open prison", where life and labour were shaped more by economic and social considerations than purely penal objectives'. Roberts tells us that the colonial language that evolved to express the practice of escape – bolting, deserting, absconding, running away, bushranging – 'captured the sense of mobility and flight that shaped Australian lives and institutions in the convict period'.⁷⁷

This restlessness was not unique to convicts. 'Even some of the free-men who have served their time', wrote ship's surgeon Peter Cunningham, 'are perpetually skipping about, seldom remaining long in one situation'.⁷⁸ Nor was it unique to the Australian colonies. Lower class soldiers and sailors in Britain who received post-war pensions were liberated from some of the pressure of the quest for work experienced by others of their social class. Their choice of casual employment rather than steady labour irked employers: they saw it as evidence of the conditioning effect of a soldier's wandering life. But such men took employment as needed or available, not so much to maximise earnings as to maintain some autonomy in earning a living.⁷⁹ In avoiding steady work and fixed residence, the urban poor also found ways of avoiding the constrictions of the city and maintain a 'roving life', choices that were not made solely out of economic necessity.⁸⁰

The diaries of Edward and Frances Henty in Port Phillip in the mid-1830s show very clearly the tensions between free settlers and the men on whom they relied for labour. Among the usual very brief entries on farm activities are both terse and lengthy comments on 'the Men'. "Sullavon [sic] unwilling to sleep by his sheep", wrote Francis

⁷⁶ Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1984 (1859), pp 82-83; Christine Wright, 'Rogues and Fools': John Coghill and the Convict System in New South Wales', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 3 (2), October, 2001, p. 45.

⁷⁷ David Andrew Roberts, 'A 'change of place': Illegal Movement on the Bathurst Frontier, 1822-1825', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 7, 2005, p. 97.

⁷⁸ Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol. 2, pp. 192-193.

⁷⁹ JE Cookson, 'Early Nineteenth-Century Scottish Military Pensioners as Homecoming Soldiers', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 52 (2), 2009, pp. 334, 337.

⁸⁰ MB Schedvin and CB Schedvin, 'The Nomadic Tribes of Urban Britain: A Prelude to Botany Bay', *Historical Studies*, vol. 18 (71), October, 1978, pp. 263-264.

at the end of 1836; 'Hayward in the water insolent & disobeying orders', he complained at the beginning of 1838; 'threatened to stop their wages', he wrote the following day, 'if they did not do a good days work'.⁸¹ In 1839 'Greaves [was] not at work & supposed to be skulking', 'H Robertson had packed up his things & had gone to the Fishery without orders', and 'Nichols' refused an order to work 'in the presence of Dr Byass'.⁸² Edward Henty was tested in April 1835 over a whale that had been hauled in. 'At 8AM', he recorded, 'Tomlins came up and reported to me that the Men would not cut the Whale in unless they got Meat'. Edward arranged to use his own bullocks and men, with a monetary incentive, 'to show the other Men that it could be done without them'. Those that continued to refuse to work did so with 'considerable abuse and at the same time daring [Edward] to touch the Whale'.⁸³ Neither Frances nor Edward Henty described whether these vexatious men were assigned, emancipated or free. And perhaps it made little difference when trying to resolve the problem of men resisting work and defying orders.

By the 1830s, the tensions that the Henty brothers experienced were an established part of life in the Australian colonies, a result of the demographic changes brought about by increasing free emigration and continuing disputes over both the treatment of convicts and the effectiveness of transportation itself. Inevitably, the punishment of further crimes committed by convicts required arrangements for additional incarceration. Macquarie Harbour on Sarah Island off Van Diemen's Land was the first site for this in 1822, followed by Moreton Bay in the north (where Brisbane now stands) in 1823, a second penal settlement on Norfolk Island in 1825 (which had been uninhabited for around ten years), and Port Arthur in Van Diemen's Land in 1833. Rhetoric that called on notions of reformation and regeneration of moral character was harder to sustain in these settlements, but Alexander Maconochie, the man appointed superintendent of the penal settlement on Norfolk Island in 1840, still aimed his efforts at 'the moral cleansing of one of our worst penal settlements' as *The Times* put it.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Francis Henty in Lynnette Peel (ed), *The Henty Journals: A Record of Farming, Whaling and Shipping at Portland Bay 1834-1839*, The Miegunyah Press in association with The State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, 1996, p. 178; 11 November 1836, 10 January 1838, 11 January 1838, Francis Henty, Diary, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7739, Box 118/5(a).

⁸² Francis Henty in Peel, *The Henty Journals*, pp. 253-254; 18 April 1839, 20 April 1839, 23 April 1839 Francis Henty, Diary.

⁸³ Edward Henty in Peel, *The Henty Journals*, pp. 60-61.

⁸⁴ Letter to the editor, 'Prevention Better than Cure', *The Times*, 26 February 1847.

Even on Norfolk Island – a paradise converted by man ‘into a Pandemonium for the damned on earth!’⁸⁵ – whether men should be treated like convicts, or convicts treated like men remained an issue. Maconochie formulated and applied most of the principles on which modern penology is based, despite being more commonly derided than applauded at the time. His ‘penal science’ was based in the beliefs that cruelty debases both victim and the society inflicting it, and that punishment should not be vindictive but designed to strengthen a prisoner’s desire and capacity to observe social constraints.⁸⁶ Easy targets for Maconochie’s critics were his methods aimed at making criminals into respectable men through ‘instruments of music, a certain weight of music paper, properties for theatrical representations, and rum to make punch with to drink the Queen’s health on her birthday... a complete library of entertaining and useful knowledge, with an assortment of fancy fireworks, and some chaplains’.⁸⁷ Maconochie advocated the value of books in rehabilitation and wanted his prisoners to read *Robinson Crusoe*, *Sense and Sensibility* and the works of Walter Scott and Maria Edgeworth.⁸⁸ One would have thought, said the *Edinburgh Review*, that Maconochie, ‘was thinking rather how he should best provide employment for virtuous leisure, than what would be the most efficient instruments of penal discipline’.⁸⁹

Polite highwaymen and gentlemen bushrangers

Penal ‘experiments’ like Maconochie’s and Bentham’s, were described by one commentator as a mark of the ‘progressing civilization of mankind’.⁹⁰ So too, was the changing nature of crime. ‘As society advances in the march of civilisation’, Mr Charles Pearson MP told members of the Exeter Library Society and their friends during a lecture on prison discipline, ‘we find that man’s wants are multiplied, his possessions are augmented, his enjoyments are heightened, his virtues are raised, but, unfortunately, his crimes are multiplied also’. Even more worryingly, these crimes were ‘of a different character’ in that the ‘force and violence’ of ‘the border marauder,

⁸⁵ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 11 August 1835.

⁸⁶ John V Barry, ‘Maconochie, Alexander (1787-1860)’, ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020160b.htm>>, accessed 9/6/2010.

⁸⁷ Letter to the editor, ‘Prevention Better than Cure’, *The Times*, 26 February 1847.

⁸⁸ ‘Memorandum on the formation of a Library at Norfolk Island, encl no 4, Sir George Gipps to Lord John Russel, 25 Feb 1840, HRA 20: 535-7, quoted in Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, pp. 170-171.

⁸⁹ ‘What is to be done with our Criminals?’, p. 241; Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, pp. 173-174.

⁹⁰ JC Byrne, *Twelve Year’s Wanderings in the British Colonies. From 1835 to 1847. Vol 1*, Richard Bentley, London, 1848, p. 47.

the midnight robber, the intrepid highwayman, the Claude Duvals, Dick Turpins, Rob Roys, Jack Sheppards, and their desperate achievements' gave way to 'crimes of fraud and craft which characterise the advanced age of society'.⁹¹ Crimes of craft and subtlety, of civilisation, raised similar anxieties as the potential deceit of manners and dress, and there was a pervasive sense that they were unmanly. The romanticisation of highwaymen in Britain and bushrangers in the Australian colonies revealed this anxiety. Representations of outlaws also revealed the extent to which men shared a perceived loss of autonomy in their relationship to authorities.

Theatrical presentations and entertaining novels paid as little attention to borders between fact and fiction as the adventure stories covered in chapter three and the utopian tales in chapter five. An 'Equestrian Spectacle', at Astley's Amphitheatre,⁹² had as its hero an actual highwayman Richard (Dick) Turpin who was hanged for his crimes in 1739, but was revived in chapbook exploits at the end of the century and thereafter in many forms of popular culture.⁹³ 'Paul Clifford The Highwayman of 1770' was a 'drama' based on a novel by Edward Bulwer, both of which made 'an ingenious defence for highwaymen'. The stage adaptation alerts us to the mixed messages that inevitably result from retellings of popular stories: the 'denouement' of this stage play was 'entirely new-modelled' with Clifford going abroad 'not as a convicted felon, but as a captain in His Majesty's service'.⁹⁴

Thus was the purported aim of much of the original literature on outlaws perverted and there were fears that such shows inspired rather than deterred men from crime. When John Shepherd was found guilty at the Old Bailey in 1786 for 'feloniously assaulting' and robbing John Halloway, *The Times* observed that 'This Shepherd seems to have adopted the sentiments of his confreres in the Beggars Opera'.⁹⁵ Two highwaymen foiled in their attempted crime in 1837 seemed to leave behind evidence of their literary influence. Along with 'a hat, a horse pistol, a passport' and other sundries was 'a small book, *The Lives of Notorious Highwaymen*'.⁹⁶ This book may have been Charles

⁹¹ *The Times*, 28 August 1849.

⁹² Astley's Amphitheatre 'Equestrian Spectacle, called RICHARD TURPIN the Highwayman' 11 November 1819 and advertised regularly until 6 December 1819 and again 17 & 18 & 21 May 1836; and at Davis's Royal Amphitheatre, 11 June 1822; Royal Coburg Theatre, 14 June 1825, 26 & 27 & 30 October and 5 November 1830.

⁹³ Derek Barlow, 'Turpin, Richard [Dick] (bap. 1705, d. 1739)', ODNB, online edn, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/27892>>, accessed 10/6/2010.

⁹⁴ Royal Coburg Theatre, *The Times*, 13 & 26 & 28 and 4 April March 1832; review of the play, *The Times*, 29 October 1835.

⁹⁵ *The Times*, 6 September 1786.

⁹⁶ *The Times*, 18 August 1837.

Whitehead's *Lives of the English Highwaymen, Pirates, and Robbers* advertised in *The Times* in 1833,⁹⁷ or it may have been Captain Johnson's *History of the Lives and Actions of the Most Famous Highwaymen and History of Pirates*, originally published around 1734 and still in print in 1814.⁹⁸ This was one of the books for sale in the library of the late John Howard Channing in 1821, and from the library of a 'nobleman' in 1829.⁹⁹ The popularity of outlaw stories cut across the social spectrum.

An editorialist at *The Times* in 1841 went into full flight on the 'subject of that perverse and mischievous sympathy for criminals'. Railing against the 'emasculated sentimentalisms of the pseudo-philanthropic school', the writer traced the 'mutual connexions (sic)' on the 'surface of society' that 'have a manifest tendency to combine, and act together upon the national mind'. Taking 'first place' was 'popular literature', where the work of EL Bulwer and his 'imitators' convinced aspiring criminals that 'death upon the gallows, after an adventurous warfare against society, is the most glorious as well as the shortest road to romantic immortality'. Theatre was also implicated, where the exploits of 'gay' highwaymen were realised before the eyes of 'the apprentices of London'. More damning was that such plays were licensed by the Lord Chamberlain and played to 'the acclamations' of an 'evidently sympathizing audience' from the ranks of society who should know better. The 'vicious curiosity and morbid interest' of these 'persons in the upper ranks of society' was fed by newspapers teeming with 'details about everything which criminals say or do', by published biographies expatiating 'upon every refinement and peculiarity in their wickedness', by 'religious ladies' circulating 'histories of their edifying ends', and by 'wax figures installed among emperors and statesmen in Madame Tussaud's bazaar'. All might still have been well if this was the extent of the romantic outlaw's sway on 'the national mind'. *The Times* editorialist thought, however, that 'Socialism and Chartism' had sprung up and become 'rank and thriving weeds under these influences'.¹⁰⁰ Such a view had been expressed in *The Times* before. Back in 1794 it had reported that 'The highwayman lately shot on the Kent Road, had formerly been a Member of the Corresponding Society, and, acting on the principles professed by it, he lost his life in an attempt to equalize the property of individuals'.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ *The Times*, 28 October 1833, 25 January 1834.

⁹⁸ *The Times*, advertisements 16 March 1813, 16 September 1814.

⁹⁹ *The Times*, 20 December 1821, 7 April 1829.

¹⁰⁰ *The Times*, 17 November 1841.

¹⁰¹ *The Times*, 7 October 1794.

That social inequalities and cruelty, rather than a simple resistance to 'restraint and steady labour', created outlaws was expressed by contemporary commentators and the outlaws themselves.¹⁰² A 'polite' highwayman in 1787 explained to his female victims that it was 'necessity' caused by 'a spiteful malicious master' that compelled him 'to borrow money in this way'. Another claimed to be driven to crime by 'distress'.¹⁰³ Claims in letters to *The Sydney Gazette* in 1824 that cruelty made bushrangers were repeated in 1834.¹⁰⁴ That bushranging activity became particularly troublesome during the late 1820s when authorities attempted to increase the severity of convict discipline gave some credence to this view.¹⁰⁵

Descriptions of outlaws' chivalrous behaviour was pervasive in newspaper reports as well as in novels and plays. *The Times* favourite adjective for highwaymen was 'polite', and little details of courteous behaviour were included in reports of crimes in Britain.¹⁰⁶ In New South Wales the bushranger William 'Jackey-Jackey' Westwood never hurt his victims and was respectful to women. He was remembered as 'the gentleman bushranger'.¹⁰⁷ Certainly the level, or lack, of violence used in a crime was often a mitigating factor'.¹⁰⁸ The prevailing view of highwaymen and bushrangers was thus summed up by Alexander Marjoribanks: they were 'reckless and determined characters', certainly, but not 'bloodthirsty'; on the whole, 'they were very decent highwaymen'.¹⁰⁹ There was particular admiration for the self-control that such men could maintain under extreme strain. One highwayman sentenced to hang was described as 'perfectly collected' and 'respectful to the Court' throughout his trial and '[h]is demeanour, on receiving the dreadful sentence, was equally cool and determined'.¹¹⁰ We should note, too, that this misbehaviour on the wrong side of law gave men on the right side of the law (both the do-it-yourselfers and the state-

¹⁰² Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol 2, pp. 194-195.

¹⁰³ *The Times*, 13 April 1787, 7 October 1788.

¹⁰⁴ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 11 November 1824, 30 December 1824, 12 July 1834.

¹⁰⁵ Russel Ward and John Robertson (eds), *Such Was Life: Select Documents in Australian Social History 1788-1850*, Ure Smith, Sydney, 1969, p. 223.

¹⁰⁶ For example, *The Times*, 13 April 1787, 12 January 1788, *The Times*, 4 October 1786, 5 April 1787.

¹⁰⁷ Jenkins, *Offending Lives*, p. 181; Martha Rutledge, 'Westwood, William [Jackey Jackey] (1820-1846)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/AS10489b.htm>>, accessed 18/6/2010.

¹⁰⁸ Letter to the editor from 'HOMO' proposing that distinction be made between robbery and murder in the case of bushrangers Webber and Walmsley who had not displayed any violence in their actions, *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 27 January 1831; Wiener, 'The Victorian Criminalization of Men', pp. 202-203.

¹⁰⁹ Marjoribanks, *Travels in New South Wales*, pp. 158-167; Ward and Robertson (eds), *Such Was Life*, p. 231-231.

¹¹⁰ *The Times*, 3 September 1788.

appointed officials) the opportunity to also be 'noble and gallant' in the pursuit and apprehension of outlaws.¹¹¹

That the distinction between the two sides of the law was reasonably arbitrary had been long recognised: as Augustine had written in 426, 'Remove justice, and what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale?' The so-called 'golden age' of piracy in the seventeenth century had arisen largely out of privateering which was often encouraged by the state and financed by venture capitalists. The distinction between 'wicked' pirates who attacked one's own shipping and 'bold' privateers who attacked the shipping of others was often a matter of expediency dependent on the diplomacy and interest of the moment.¹¹² For men a hundred years later whose autonomy was increasingly eroded by the interventions of an increasingly centralised state, bands of robbers, pirates and gypsies began to symbolise a free and easy society.¹¹³ And persistent portrayals of the gentlemanly and self-controlled conduct of highwaymen and bushrangers as belonging to a bygone age, exposed the anxieties that so many men felt in a changing world.¹¹⁴ Their increasingly sedentary jobs in the factories and professional offices of town environments, their insecurities in casual agriculture labour, their abdication of responsibility for law and order to paid officials, all made the independent, horse-riding, outlaws who made the countryside their own, seem even more attractive. That these anxieties centred on ideals of manliness, of what it meant to be a man, was revealed in an 1828 review of a Covent Garden Theatre production of 'The Iron Chest:' the actor playing the robber 'captain' Armstrong, was 'altogether too ladylike in voice and person for a highwayman'.¹¹⁵

It is vain to fly

A notable example of the blurred distinction between the right and wrong side of the law was created by those men in the Australian colonies who settled beyond the reaches of the law, the 'squatters' who desired to use the land rather than roam across

¹¹¹ *The Times*, 28 February 1848.

¹¹² Augustine, *City of God*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1972, Book 4, Chapter 4, p. 139; Peter Hayes, 'Pirates, Privateers and the Contract Theories of Hobbes and Locke', *History of Political Thought*, vol. XXIX (3), Autumn, 2008, pp. 461, 478.

¹¹³ Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1973, p. 157.

¹¹⁴ Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol 2, p. 197; *The Times*, 1 February 1838.

¹¹⁵ *The Times*, 11 January 1828; George Colman the Younger, *The Iron Chest; A Play, In Three Acts*, Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, London, 1808.

it like bushrangers. In settling, these men were behaving as the authorities hoped, but in cultivating and stocking land to which they had no legal title they were outside the law. In one sense, colonial authorities created squatters as demand for land continually exceeded official capacity to survey and grant or sell new land. As judge Roger Therry pointed out, the term 'squatters' included settlers whose own lands became insufficient to their increasing herds and flocks, and included '[y]oung men of good family and connexion (sic) in England, retired officers of the army and navy, graduates of Oxford and Cambridge', and many of them came to be among 'the wealthiest of the land'.¹¹⁶ Squatting was thus the implementation of the aims of emigration and colonisation: the cultivation and population of so-called 'empty' or 'waste' lands with civilised men, husbands, fathers and citizens.¹¹⁷ That was one potential. But beyond the 'limits of the colony', there was also the potential to escape the restraints of authority and conventional society. Squatters and 'the bush' that they occupied were therefore a possible source of unrest.¹¹⁸

Major general Lachlan Macquarie, governor of New South Wales from 1810 to 1821, had foreseen some of the problem. The Australian colonies, he contended, had their share of those men found in even the 'best-ordered communities', those '[t]urbulent individuals, generally stumbling on the very threshold of the law, impatient of all restraint, and ever ready to asperse the most temperate administration of the most wholesome regulations'. Such men, he said, were always going to find government administration 'oppressive'.¹¹⁹ But government administration was not so much 'oppressive' as unpredictable. The official response to squatting ranged from a denial that verbal agreements and occupation were a basis for legal possession, to the Waste Lands (Australia) Act of 1846 that appeased squatters with leases of up to fourteen years, rights of pre-emption and compensation for improvement.¹²⁰

But the legal problems of squatting extended beyond the lack of legal title: where land boundaries were delineated by oral testimony rather than written title, the litigious

¹¹⁶ Therry, *Reminiscences*, pp. 241.

¹¹⁷ Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 2*, p. 303.

¹¹⁸ Anon, *A Voice From The Bush in Australia*, William Curry, Jun. and Company; Smith, Elder, and Company; John Johnstone, Dublin, London and Edinburgh, 1839, p. 18; Robert Grant, "'The Fit and Unfit': Suitable Settlers for Britain's Mid-Nineteenth-Century Colonial Possessions', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, vol. 33 2005, p. 170; Atkinson, *Europeans in Australia: Vol. 2*, pp. 302-303.

¹¹⁹ New South Wales. Return: copy of report, and extract of a letter of Major General Macquarie, relating to the said colony, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1828 (477), p. 8.

¹²⁰ Robert Hoddle, Diary, SLV, H12032, Box 53/2 (a) & (b), p. 35; SG Foster, *Colonial Improver: Edward Deas Thomson 1800-1879*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1978, p. 87.

potential of squatting was huge.¹²¹ Squatters appeared regularly before the Supreme Court of New South Wales, as defendants accused of trespass by men who actually had legal rights to the land in question,¹²² and as disputants over the boundaries of cattle and sheep stations 'beyond the boundaries of the Colony'.¹²³ By 1840, judges were losing patience with the 'trifling' nature of many such cases.¹²⁴ Around this time there was also growing agitation that squatters as 'the great producing class of the colony' possessed 'no voice in the legislature of the colony'. Far from being lawless wanderers, squatters were men who had endured 'hardships, privations and dangers in the wilderness of the interior' for the good of the colonies' economies.¹²⁵ Squatters themselves vacillated about their actions. 'Upon the whole I think we have done right in squatting on the bay', wrote Thomas Henty to his son Edward, 'But I still wish to have a confirmed right from Government'.¹²⁶

While squatters sought representation in the colonial legislature on the basis of their contribution to the economy – 'no taxation without representation'¹²⁷ – emancipists sought the same, or jury duty at the very least, as acknowledgment of their participation in civil society. The first convict pardons were granted in 1790 and ex-convicts, usually controversially, held positions as lawyers and magistrates but emancipists were not permitted to sit on juries until 1829.¹²⁸ By the early 1820s ex-convicts held well over half the wealth of the colony and were masters of the same proportion of the convicts; they also featured prominently in an emerging 'middling' class (between landed proprietors and the convict workforce) of free independent workers, tradesmen, agents, overseers and small capitalists.¹²⁹ Transportation could create that surprising change of circumstances which saw a receiver of stolen goods like Pierce Collits become a valued innkeeper and post master, a burglar like Henry

¹²¹ Therry, *Reminiscences*, pp. 266-269.

¹²² For example *Martin v Munn* 22 and 23 October 1832, *Payne v Ashby* 19 September 1834, *Williams v Campbell* 19 March 1838, *Decisions of the Superior Courts of New South Wales*, Division of Law, Macquarie University, 1788-1899, <<http://www.law.mq.edu.au/scnsw/>>, accessed 20/5/2010.

¹²³ For example, *Scott v Dight* 22 March 1839, *Hallen v King* 8 July 1839, *Decisions of the Superior Courts of New South Wales*.

¹²⁴ For example *Cobcroft v Pringle* 6 July 1840, *Hall v Scougal* 16 October 1840, *Decisions of the Superior Courts of New South Wales*.

¹²⁵ Byrne, *Twelve Year's Wanderings*, pp. 186, 190-191.

¹²⁶ Thomas Henty to Edward Henty, 11 April 1838, Miscellaneous correspondence, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7739, Box 119/2 (e).

¹²⁷ JJ Auchmuty, 'Wentworth, D'Arcy (1762-1827)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020530b.htm>>, accessed 19/6/2010

¹²⁸ New South Wales, &c. (Crown lands and emigration.) Return to an address to His Majesty, dated 14 September 1831..., House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1831 (328), p. 13.

¹²⁹ Hirst, *Convict Society and Its Enemies*, pp. 80-81; Roberts, 'A change of place', p. 121.

Kable become a prominent landowner and successful trader, and a twice-convicted thief like William Hutchinson become an important citizen.¹³⁰

Hutchinson was a director of the Bank of New South Wales with considerable interests in commercial undertakings like the Waterloo flour-mill; pastoralism on his properties near Moss Vale, Bargo, Mittagong, Sutton Forest, Bringelly and Bong Bong; and, real estate in Sydney, Liverpool, Parramatta and Melbourne. He was also a director of the Marine Insurance Company, the Australian Wheat and Flour Company, and the Mutual Fire Insurance Association, and was active in the concerns of the Sydney Public Free Grammar School, the Sydney College and the Benevolent Society. In 1835 he participated in the formation of the Australian Patriotic Association. As one of those ex-convict men that free emigrant Alexander Riley told a parliamentary select committee were 'very useful members of the community', he was, unsurprisingly, one of the leaders in the campaign for fuller civil rights for emancipists.¹³¹ Being 'useful' was not sufficient and financial independence alone did not secure successful male adult status. Civic participation and political representation became an additional marker of that success, increasingly so as the nineteenth century wore on, and this meant being on the right side of that often shifting and seemingly arbitrary line drawn by the law.

In making homes, conducting businesses, changing their status, and contesting prevailing social relations, say historians WM Robbins and David Roberts, convicts orchestrated their most enduring form of escape.¹³² Escape was a constant trope in accounts and reports of the colonies' early decades; it was a real possibility for convicts in a variety of ways.¹³³ Physical escape, though not to China as so many convicts believed, was dramatic and entertaining, the stuff of stories.¹³⁴ Some runaway convicts formed a small colony on Kangaroo Island, gaining a 'precarious livelihood from the kangaroos, seals, and shell-fish:' ship's surgeon Peter Cunningham called them 'Robinson Crusoes'.¹³⁵ But more common were smaller acts of control over the

¹³⁰ 'Collits, Pierce (1769?-1848)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010228b.htm>>; DR Hainsworth, 'Kable, Henry (1763-1846)', <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020028b.htm>>, ADB, accessed 20/6/2010; Evidence of Alexander Riley, Report from the Select Committee on the State of Gaols, &c, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1819 (579), p. 29.

¹³¹ Evidence of Alexander Riley, 1819 (579); Paul Edwin Le Roy, 'Hutchinson, William (1772-1846)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010533b.htm>>, accessed 19/6/2010.

¹³² WM Robbins, 'Spatial Escape and The Hyde Park Convict Barracks', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 7, 2005, p. 81; Roberts, 'A change of place', p. 122.

¹³³ Grace Karskens, "'This spirit of emigration': The Nature and Meanings of Escape in Early New South Wales", *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 7, 2005, p. 1.

¹³⁴ Peter Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol. 1, Libraries Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1827 (1966), p. 181; Hunter, *Historical Journal*, pp. 372-374; *Sydney Gazette*, 26 March 1803.

¹³⁵ Cunningham, *Two Years in New South Wales*, vol 1, p. 22.

nature and intensity of the work that they would do, temporary absences, the unauthorised personal relationships they entered into, even the form of language, the convict 'cant' which was meant to 'exclude, offend and to mislead officialdom'.¹³⁶ And underscoring the very real misery endured by so many convicts was the incidences among them of suicide. The actual extent of this is hard to substantiate as many were contrived to be murder, considered the lesser sin: those who killed others could repent and still enter heaven. Thus a convict hung for the murder of a fellow convict may have been a double suicide.¹³⁷ These men made their 'emigration' to 'Eternity'.¹³⁸

Although Defoe believed that an honest man would never run into 'Extremes and Excesses on one Hand or the other', he knew men's potential for duplicity even if he did not appreciate the often relative nature of that deceit: 'A Man may be punctual in his Dealings, and a Knave in his Relations; honest in his Ware-house, and a Knave at his Fire-side: He may be a Saint in his Company, a Devil in his Family; true to his Word, and false to his Friendship'.¹³⁹ There was a hope, expressed by poet Robert Southey, that on the 'wild shores' of the Australian colonies 'the saving hand of Grace' would probe a man's 'secret soul, and cleanse its wounds', and by *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* that the colonies would be the venue for 'a great experiment in the faculty of renovation in the human character'.¹⁴⁰ But perhaps death was the only escape when it came to men's ambiguous relationship to the law, which was, after all, their relationship with each other. 'It is in vain to fly from regal power;' observed surveyor Robert Hoddle, 'even the desert is denied the poor emigrant, who endeavours to shun the labarynth (sic) of the law, and lead a life according to nature, is eventually obliged to submit to power'.¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ Robbins, 'Spatial Escape and The Hyde Park Convict Barracks', pp. 81-87.

¹³⁷ Lynette Ross, 'The Final Escape: An Analysis of Suicide at the Penal Settlement of Port Arthur', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 7, 2005, p. 199.

¹³⁸ Price, *Journal*, pp. 49-50.

¹³⁹ Daniel Defoe, *Serious Reflections During the Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe: With His Vision of the Angelick World. Written by Himself*, W Taylor, London, 1720, p. 68.

¹⁴⁰ Robert Southey, *Poetical Works of Robert Southey. In Ten Volumes. Volume II*, 1864, p. 84; Anon, 'New South Wales', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. XLIII (CCLXXVII), November, 1838, pp. 690-717.

¹⁴¹ Hoddle, *Diary*, p. 35.

Chapter 8:

The centre of all my enterprises – the paradox of families

**A bad husband was never yet a happy man — After the exertions of the day, we have the pleasures of society and conversation — Absent fathers? —
Enterprising families — The great moral chain by which society is held together**

Defoe wrote his fictional narratives at the same time as his moral treatises. But while the *The Family Instructor*, 1715, *Religious Courtship*, 1722, and *Conjugal Lewdness*, 1727, promoted the virtues of the family, none of his fictional protagonists unambiguously embraced domestic life.¹ Robinson Crusoe's experiences at home after he was rescued from his island, for example, when he spent almost seven years back discharging family obligations (he educated two nephews and set one up for a life at sea, he married and fathered three children) takes two paragraphs to tell, in a book that ends on page 389 with a promise of another volume to come that will relate the adventures of the next ten years.² This first account of his travels was book-ended by Crusoe leaving family: he ran away from his parents at the beginning and he farewelled his children at the end. It is thus tempting to see family as simply off stage in Crusoe's story: though his feelings are sincere, his family relationships seem to be of little significance.

Men and families are a conundrum in the historiography of the period of this study. The mid-nineteenth century domestication of men and subsequent flight from domesticity towards the end of the century at the height of empire is accepted up to a point, though historians are more likely to modify that picture with an understanding that the restless lone man and the settled family man are not markers of historical change, but illustrations of the persistent tension between these ideals.³ Leonore Davidoff and

¹ Christopher Flint, 'Orphaning the Family: The Role of Kinship in Robinson Crusoe', *ELH*, vol. 55 (2), Summer, 1988, p. 381.

² Daniel Defoe, *The Life And Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*, Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, London, 1790 (1719), pp. 386-387.

³ Martin Francis, 'The Domestication of the Male? Recent Research on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Masculinity', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 45 (3), 2002, p. 646; Christopher E Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West: Gender, Civilization and the Body*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, New York, 2008, p. 168; Stephen Garton, 'War and Masculinity in Twentieth Century Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies*,

Catherine Hall capture some of this in their observation that so-called 'autonomous' men were always 'embedded in families'.⁴ Thus sons seeking to make their own way in the world is a story as old as Adam. And Crusoe was not the first wandering, adventuring husband: Odysseus had long provided a model for that behaviour. Men's unsettled relationship with domesticity, however, became more acute as an increasing emphasis on conjugal families vied not only with representations of men's essential constitutions as active rather than sedentary, but also with harsh social circumstances (post-war economic collapse, labour unrest and poor harvests) that made the financial independence necessary to establish a family harder to attain. Even more unsettling was the potential, or even necessity, of achieving that financial independence through the spoils of war, the risks of maritime trade, and the disruption of emigration, which left men vulnerable to being represented as 'absent' fathers.

In this context, as this chapter argues, emigration to the Australian colonies was promoted as a means to balance competing imperatives: where adventure and restlessness could be a means to secure the family's future rather than an escape from family; where women's civilising presence was a welcome balance to the possibly degrading aspects of colonial life rather than an effeminating threat as they were often seen to be in Britain; where the Crusoe story was not escapist fantasy but a seemingly viable guide that spoke to the possibility of being both adventurer and husband, autonomous and communal, active and settled. Unfortunately for men, the demographic imbalance of the sexes in the Australian colonies meant that the unskilled emigrant and ex-convict had less chance of enjoying the benefits of marriage and family than their counterparts in Britain.⁵ It was difficult to find themselves like colonial surveyor George Prideaux Harris 'safe in the harbour of happiness'.⁶

vol. (56), 1998, p. 93; Penny Russell, 'Introduction', in Penny Russell (ed), *For Richer, For Poorer: Early Colonial Marriages*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1994, p. 6.

⁴ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, Routledge, London, 2002, p xvi.

⁵ Michael Belcher, 'Demographic Influences on Children and the Family in New South Wales, 1820-1841', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 1 (2), 1999, p. 16.

⁶ George Prideaux Harris to his mother, Hobart, 12 October 1805, Miscellaneous letters and papers, Letters and Papers of GP Harris Vol I, BL, ADD MS 45156, Leaf 28-31.

A bad husband was never yet a happy man

Marriage and family were integral to notions of successful male adulthood. 'Heading a household', says John Tosh, 'and providing fully for its material needs were the nub of independence'.⁷ While the traditional legitimising function of marriage was transformed in the nineteenth century to support claims for political participation, the expectations of men in marriage, and by men of marriage, were also changing. Widespread support for Queen Caroline during her trial in 1820 seemed to indicate that a new model of manliness was in ascendancy. But appeals to the king to perform his duties as husband were more than calls for the monarchy to share emerging middle-class values.⁸ The rhetoric of support for the queen aligned chivalry, courage and heightened moral sensibility with the protection of women in such a way that this defence was a both a marker of civilisation, a form of patriotism and an expression of ideal manliness. As the men of Limehouse, London said in their *Second Address presented to her Majesty* 'We consulted our duties as ENGLISHMEN and CHRISTIANS and finding them in unison with our feelings as MEN, we endeavoured to wipe away the stain from our national character'.⁹ Such petitions and protests came from working men as well as those of the middling sort. As a Mr Wooler expressed in a public meeting: 'the test of respectability was not whether men were in high or low rank, but whether in whatever class of life they might be placed, they discharged their duty'.¹⁰ In the Australian colonies, philanthropist Caroline Chisholm went so far as to consider that men were only truly men when they were husbands.¹¹

Performance of their domestic duties meant more to men than protection of women: it also asserted their moral right to participate in national political life.¹² As Tosh explains it, 'If the household really was a microcosm of the body politic, it followed that those who governed their households well possessed political virtue and should be recognized accordingly'. This argument gained traction after the Reform Act of 1832 and became one of the strongest justifications for extending the franchise during the

⁷ John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire*, Pearson Longman, Harlow, England, 2005, p. 181.

⁸ Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial', p. 266; Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp 150-155.

⁹ Quoted in Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial', p. 258.

¹⁰ *Morning Chronicle*, 8 September 1820, quoted in Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial', p. 260.

¹¹ Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 2 – Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2004, p. 262.

¹² Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial', p. 261.

period before the second Reform Act in 1867.¹³ In this context marriage was the 'foundation of community, and the chief band of society', and a 'duty' that 'every person' owed 'to the national community'.¹⁴ It was part of the 'regularity and order' that came with civilised society.¹⁵ Between earnest religious instruction on the matter, like Samuel Stennett's *Discourses on Domestick Duties*, 1783, and Defoe's *Religious Courtship*, and the ridicule of periodicals like *The World*, guidance on achieving a successful marriage was as confusing as that for maintaining a man's physical health or social position.¹⁶

Running commentary in *The Spectator* clearly showed the range of attitudes regarding marriage during the eighteenth century, from it being 'a deification inverted' (where, through familiarity, a man's 'goddess' sinks into a 'woman') and 'a patriarchal sovereignty', to it being a test of virtue, because more virtues were required to 'make a good husband or wife' than for any other character. The pages of *The Spectator* also revealed that a generational change was felt to be underway. A letter writer describing married women as inconstant was decried as 'one of those old-fashioned men of wit and pleasure of the town, that shews (sic) his parts by raillery on marriage'. But now the label of 'fond husband' was to no longer be thought 'ridiculous'. It was, possibly, a 'revolution in the world of gallantry'.¹⁷ Over and over a place for mutual affection was put forward.¹⁸ *The New Whole Duty of Man* in 1798 advised parents to take it into account when guiding their children into this decision 'upon which the happiness or misery of life depends'.¹⁹

¹³ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*, Yale University Press, London, 1999, p. 139.

¹⁴ *The Spectator*, London, 1775, vol. 7, no. 522, p. 374; 'Proposals for a Tax on Celibacy', *The Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 4, 1762, p. 640; George Arden, *With Regard to Australia Felix, the Finest Province of the Great Territory of New South Wales*, Facsimile reprint, Queensbury Hill Press, Carlton, 1977, Gazette Office, Melbourne, 1840, p. 101.

¹⁵ Edward Barry, *Theological, Philosophical, and Moral Essays, on the Following Subjects: Celibacy, Wedlock, Seduction, Pride, Duelling, Self Murder, Lying*, HD Symonds, London, 1799, p. 22.

¹⁶ Samuel Stennett, *Discourses on Domestick Duties*, R Buckland and T Cadell, London, 1783; Daniel Defoe, *Religious Courtship*, 8th edition, David Niven, Glasgow, 1797; Adam Fitz-Adam, *The World. By Adam Fitz-Adam*, A new edition, Edinburgh, 1774, for example, vol. 1, p. 80; vol. 2 p. 306; Patricia Demers, 'Moore, Edward (1712–1757)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, May 2005 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19104, accessed 22 Sept 2010]

¹⁷ *The Spectator*, London, 1775, vol. 1, no. 73, p. 441; vol. 7, no. 500, pp. 144–148; vol. 8, no. 607, p. 261; vol. 7, no. 506, pp. 180–181; vol. 7, no. 499, p. 143; *The Spectator*, London, 1775, vol. 7, no. 525, pp. 293–294.

¹⁸ For example, *The Spectator*, London, 1775, vol. 2, no. 149, pp. 147–149; vol. 7, no. 490, p. 91.

¹⁹ *The New Whole Duty of Man, Containing the faith as well as practice of a Christian: made easy for the practice of the present age, as the old*, London, 1798, p. 202.

Marriage, family and domesticity were, therefore, imbued with social, cultural and political capital and the expectations of them increased as the seventeenth-century conception of marriage based on a model of sovereign and subject changed during the eighteenth century to one based on mutuality and companionship.²⁰ The personal stakes for men were high, when according to William Cobbett, a man could turn even a good young woman into 'a really bad wife and mother' and 'a *bad husband* was never yet a *happy man*'.²¹ Cobbett agreed that passion was a good basis for marriage: it was only 'that ardent affection which first brought the parties together' that would see them through the 'cares and troubles' of rearing a family.²² But the expression of heightened emotions slid uncomfortably close to effeminacy. Finding a balance was the aim of advice literature on marriage which warned men not to confuse civility with effeminacy. Unfortunately, such advice was undermined by comments like those of Vicesimus Knox that for all of domesticity's pleasures, 'they unfortunately appear to a great part of mankind, insipid, unmanly, and capable of satisfying none but the weak, the spiritless, the inexperienced, and the effeminate'.²³ A 'successful' marriage was the antithesis of adventure.²⁴

Davidoff and Hall have given us a comprehensive picture of the middle classes during the period of this study for whom marriage and family was the basis of the moral and religious life that business supported and that made business activities worthwhile. These men and women, during the 1820s, exhibited the 'demographically unusual combination of late marriage with large families', giving men time to establish themselves in business or the military, or in entrepreneurial ventures abroad.²⁵ The families they created were often part of broader family networks that were intertwined by ideology and shared interests as well as marriage. The group of friends of which William Wilberforce was a member were all High Church, all Tories, who co-operated on the same humanitarian and charitable projects, and sometimes business as well, read the same devotional books, and owned a periodical, the *British Critic*, in which they published their views. Their families partied and holidayed together and births, marriages, and deaths led to a flood of letters between them.²⁶ '[T]here can be no

²⁰ Chris Roulston, 'Space and the Representation of Marriage in Eighteenth-Century Advice Literature', *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 49 (1), 2008, p. 25.

²¹ William Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, Henry Frowde, London, 1906 (1829), pp. 137, 194.

²² William Cobbett, *Cottage Economy*, Stephen Gould and Son, New York, 1824, pp. 84-85.

²³ Vicesimus Knox, *Essays, Moral and Literary*, J Richardson and Co, London, 1821, p. 224.

²⁴ Roulston, 'Space and the Representation of Marriage', pp. 35-38.

²⁵ Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 222-225.

²⁶ AB Webster, *Joshua Watson: The Story of a Layman 1771-1855*, SPCK, London, 1954, pp. 23-28.

doubt', say Davidoff and Hall 'that family life was a positive experience for many people and, perhaps most important of all, they made a point of perceiving it in this way'.²⁷

There is no shortage of evidence for this in men's letters and diaries. His wife's 'dangerous illness', made retired army officer Robert Johnson 'more sensible than ever of the virtues of this most excellent woman'. Although wife and children had put an end to his 'rambling and roving', radical writer William Cobbett credited them with 'sharpening' his industry and 'spurring' him on. From New South Wales, surveyor George Prideaux Harris sincerely congratulated his brother for getting 'noosed' and rejoiced to his mother about his own 'most perfect happiness' (underlining in original) in marriage. Farquhar Mackenzie resumed his diary writing after a three and half year interruption to record his 'contentment & happiness', more than he 'ever expected in this world' in 'being loved by one who is dearer to me than I can express'. Matthew and Ann Flinders had been married for three months before he sailed with instructions to explore the south Australian coastline. Eighteen months later he wrote to her of his growing love: 'I thought indeed I loved thee much, but knew not what much was till afterward'.²⁸

Had William Hutton's father left us his thoughts on family life, they may not have been so hopeful. As a wool comber who became a journeyman when his business failed, Hutton senior struggled to stay among the lower echelons of the middling classes and his life were beset by deaths and disappointments. William, however, began an apprenticeship in a silk mill at the age of seven, and died a property owner with a country house outside of Birmingham at the age of ninety-two. Along with that social mobility, came the appreciative vocabulary in which Hutton described his wife and children, yet there is no doubting his sincerity. He wrote of his wife as an 'inestimable treasure' and a 'faithful and dear companion'. In the early years of their marriage, Hutton 'attended to business; and nursed [his] children', sometimes carrying three at a time, which he could never do 'without a smile'. Two sons died in infancy, and

²⁷ Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 355.

²⁸ Captain Robert Johnson, Diaries, ESRO AMS 5848/1; William Cobbett, *The Autobiography of William Cobbett*, Faber and Faber, London, 1967, p. 230; George Prideaux Harris to Harry, 15 October 1805; Harris to mother, 12 October 1805, Letters and Papers of GP Harris Vol I, Leaf 28-31, 32; 4 August 1846, Farquhar Mackenzie, Journal, ML, A1291, CY1808; Paul Brunton (ed), *Matthew Flinders: Personal Letters from An Extraordinary Life*, Hordern House in association with the Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002, p. 89.

another was still-born, but his eldest daughter Catherine was the 'pleasure' of his life until his death.²⁹

Relationships in elite families were shaped by different imperatives and expectations but family bonds and values of domesticity were not entirely absent among them. Charles Lennox, the third Duke of Richmond, and Lady Mary Bruce had, according to Horace Walpole, the sort of marriage that aristocratic families strived for: it was 'the perfectest match in the world; youth, beauty, riches, alliances, and all the blood of all the kings from Robert Bruce to Charles II'.³⁰ It seems to have been a happy union, though childless. Extant letters from Mary between 1793 and 1795 have her writing chatty and personal letters to Charles every day that he is away in London, and they appear to have been reciprocated as she told him he was 'very good to be so great a correspondent'.³¹ Charles was apparently unfaithful but this did not impinge on his sense of responsibility for family, including the three illegitimate daughters by his housekeeper for whom he provided in his will.³²

Just months before his death, the Duke wrote thirteen pages of advice and admonishment on domestic matters to his nephew and heir, Charles Lennox. While Lennox had no doubt of his nephew's 'Bravery, Diligence, assiduity, and popular manners' with his soldiers, he wished that Charles would ensure care of his 'numerous Family which is one of the first Duties of a Father'. This, wrote Lennox, required Charles to 'be prudent, rationally economical and above all Things regular'. Having a house full of companions that encouraged Charles to drink only promoted 'Dissipation and Idleness' and 'foolish Passions' that interfered with 'a domestick Life', and did not set a good example for his sons. Besides, if Charles 'were inclined to be more domestick', Lennox was sure that 'Lady Charlotte would be more pleasant'. 'I grow old & my Time short', wrote Lennox, 'what have I to look to for the continuation of my Family and the various schemes that one forms for its Benefit and advantages but you. In you centers my future Pride for the Family'.³³

²⁹ William Hutton, *The Life of William Hutton*, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, London, 1816, pp. 12-13, 97, p. 99, 106; CR Elrington, 'Hutton, William (1723-1815)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/14317>>, accessed 24 April 2010.

³⁰ Quoted in William C Lowe, 'Lennox, Charles, third duke of Richmond, third duke of Lennox, and duke of Aubigny in the French nobility (1735-1806)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2008 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/16451>>, accessed 24 April 2010.

³¹ 16 April 1793, MSS 228 Mary to Charles, 3rd Duke of Richmond, 1792-1795, Goodwood Collection, WSRO.

³² William C Lowe, 'Lennox, Charles'.

³³ 5 June 1806, MSS 224, Letters from Charles, 3rd Duke of Richmond, Goodwood Collection.

It is far harder to ascertain lower class men's understandings of, and feelings for, family, though we can perhaps read some significance in their actions. Snowden Dunhill credited his wife Sarah Taylor for cementing his youthful indiscretions into a life of crime. Sarah already had a son, Robert, and together they had five children. While Snowden spent six years in the Thames hulks, his son William and daughter Sarah were convicted and transported to the Australian colonies. In 1819 Snowden's wife Sarah and children Rosanna and George were all convicted of stealing. Sarah and George were transported for seven years. Robert Taylor was also transported at some stage. In 1823 Snowden himself was convicted again for stealing and this time transported. On his release in 1830, he went looking for his family. William had died immediately on arrival, George had been executed for stealing two hundred lambs, daughter Sarah and Robert Taylor were still alive, but they had all lost touch with Rosanna. Snowden found his wife Sarah in Hobart in 1833 where he was said to be hawking the pies she made.³⁴ The evidence is slim in this and similar stories but we can see the effort made to maintain family connections under the least conducive of circumstances.

It is certainly the case that wives and children did not have leading roles in many men's diaries, reminiscences and other self-writings, and when men did write about family they often used formulaic expressions of affection and appreciation, copied perhaps from cheap publications of letters ('and answers!') to 'cover any possible situation'.³⁵ This should not call into question the sincerity of their feelings: particular forms were used to express emotion because they had cultural meaning for both writer and reader.³⁶ When less familiar descriptions of incidents or feelings made it into writing it was invariably when marriage was not the affectionate affair of the popular press. John Hoath wrote to his friend William Hall of acquaintances in their mutual home village; of arguments, bigamy and unsanctified unions. '[S]o much for men & wives quarreling, for living with a Woman & not marrying, & for marrying two Wives', he said, 'I think a Batchelors (sic) Life preferable to them all yet'.³⁷ Absalom Watkin in Manchester and George Boyle White in New South Wales were very open in their

³⁴ Snowden Dunhill, *The Life of Snowden Dunhill of Spaldington, East Riding (1766-1838)*, Mr Pye (Books), Howden, 1987 (c1835), pp. 1-6; 'Hobart Town Police Report – Snowden Dunhill', *Colonial Times*, 11 February 1834.

³⁵ David Fordyce, *The New and Complete British Letter-Writer; Or, Young Secretary's Instructor in Polite Modern Letter-Writing*, London, 1790.

³⁶ Bruce Hindmarsh, 'Wherever I go I will right to you', in Lucy Frost and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart (eds), *Chain Letters: Narrating Convict Lives*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001, p. 173.

³⁷ John Hoath to William Hall, 14 September 1812, William Hall Archives, WSRO, ADD MSS 39854-858.

diaries about their disappointment in their marriages. Boyle thought his wife sullen and discontented, neglectful of the children, slovenly in her housekeeping and her attitude to him 'most unwife like'. He was 'thoroughly disgusted by the thoughtless unfeeling conduct of [his] helpmate'.³⁸ Sometimes arguments came to blows. William Hutton soothed the violent quarrel of an aunt and uncle: 'she had struck him, which provoked him beyond bounds'.³⁹

By and large though, men wrote of their marriages with gratefulness. For George Foster struggling in the colonies to pay his father's debts and missing the pleasures of society and the conveniences of life in Britain, marriage was a consolation: 'If I were not married, I should lead the saddest life imaginable'. John Macarthur wrote to his wife Elizabeth of his gratitude and delight in the way she managed the farm and family enterprises while he was in England. 'I am perfectly aware, my beloved wife, of the difficulties you have to contend with, and fully convinced that not one woman in a thousand, (no one I know) would have the resolution and perseverance to contend with them all, much more to surmount them in the manner that you have so happily done'. Long-time bachelor JJ Macintyre who had 'neglected' opportunities for marriage, ignored the 'many hints from mothers and aunts and sisters' and escaped to London, did eventually marry just days before sailing for the Australian colonies. When he later nearly drowned in a sailing accident he felt no 'fear or trepidation', he did not utter 'a prayer or petition for pardon', his thoughts were only of his wife.⁴⁰

Emotions ran deep in families, from the heart- and spirit-breaking sadness over the deaths of children, to the almost inexpressible happiness between husband and wife.⁴¹ When John Wallace returned home after narrowly avoiding a prison sentence, His wife's relief was palpable. 'I ne'er saw folk as daft happy', said a neighbour, 'as when

³⁸ Magdalen Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993; 11-14 January 1843, 11 February 1843, 14 March 1843, 17 March 1844, George Boyle White, Journals, 1827-1845, ML, B 600, CY 4723.

³⁹ Hutton, *The Life*, p. 29.

⁴⁰ George Foster to Thomas Pennant, 5 March 1787, JR Foster, Letters to Thomas Pennant, ML, DOC 489, CY 4588; Macarthur quoted in Hazel King, 'Lives in exile: Elizabeth and John Macarthur', in Penny Russell (ed), *For Richer, For Poorer: Early Colonial Marriages*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1994, p. 46; JJ Macintyre Papers Vol I, BL, MS ADD 41742, L156, L187, L203.

⁴¹ Hutton, *The Life*, p. 109; Elizabeth Marsden to Captain Piper, 15 August 1809, Letters from Marsden family to Mary and John Stokes, ML, MSS 719, CY175; 16 July 1828, Johnson, Diaries; Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 356.

Peggy grap John a' in her arms, an' grat like a bairn'.⁴² The 22 April 1821 was one of the happiest days of Robert Johnson's life. He spent it with his wife whose 'gentle virtues' endeared her to him 'more & more' every year. They 'went to church twice & wound the evening up by recapitulating to each other many... proofs of early affection and increasing Love'. The day had 'a more than common tinge of gentle, graceful, and soulsubduing tenderness'. Ralph Clark confessed to his shipboard diary that had he known how 'unhappy' leaving his family would make him, he would 'never have come away'.⁴³

There is much evidence of these strong affections among convicted men too. You can see them in the letters of the Loughborough Luddites to their wives and fathers as they awaited execution.⁴⁴ Historians Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, Paul Donnelly and Timothy Millett find them in criminal tattoos and convict-made tokens which expressed family connections and love rather than criminal solidarity.⁴⁵ And Tina Picton Phillipps describes them in case studies of transported men, each one 'a husband and a father', who strove to support families in the face of all obstacles. 'In none of these stories', writes Picton Phillipps, 'did the crime which had caused the disruption of family life count for so much as a jot on the abacus of affection'.⁴⁶

Petitions for clemency in the United Kingdom's national archives further attest to the importance of discharging duty as husband and father, and the enduring attachment to children.⁴⁷ John Flemming's parents, for example, pleaded for mercy though 'from their age being utterly unable to throw themselves at your Majesty's feet'.⁴⁸ Particularly poignant are the letter's in the petitioner's own hand, such as Frances Gordon's letter for clemency on his son's death penalty. 'Permit an old man', the wavering writing says, 'bourne down with the most heavy affliction, after serving my King and country for

⁴² John Younger, *Autobiography of John Younger, Shoemaker*, St. Boswells, J & JH Rutherford, Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1881, p. 35.

⁴³ 22 April 1821, Johnson, Diaries; Paul G Fidlon and RJ Ryan (eds), *The Journal and Letters of Lt. Ralph Clark 1787-1792*, Australian Documents Library in association with the Library of Australian History Pty Ltd, Sydney, 1981, p. 19.

⁴⁴ Kevin Binfield (ed), *Writings of the Luddites*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2004, pp. 155-156.

⁴⁵ Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, Paul Donnelly and Timothy Millett, 'Dr Martin and the Forty Thieves', in Lucy Frost and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart (eds), *Chain Letters: Narrating Convict Lives*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001, p. 187

⁴⁶ Tina Picton Phillipps, 'These are but items in the sad ledger of despair', in Frost and Maxwell-Stewart (eds), *Chain Letters*, p. 147.

⁴⁷ For example, UKNA, HO 47/8/3 98, HO 47/8/3 131, HO 47/11/3 189.

⁴⁸ UKNA, HO 47/8/5 206.

thirty years, to humbly implore your goodness towards my most unhappy son'.⁴⁹ Even voluntary migration could leave parent's bereft. 'Papa is likewise getting much more reconciled to your absence', wrote Mary Ann Wyndham to her brother George Wyndham three years after his departure for New South Wales, 'and can speak of you and even drink your health with more composure than he used to. But I assure you, my dear George, it was a long time before we ventured to speak of you before him'.⁵⁰

After the exertions of the day, we have the pleasures of society and conversation

The capacity to provide for family was the biggest obstacle to men becoming husbands and fathers, as William Cobbett told young men in his *Weekly Political Register* in 1829.⁵¹ That Cobbett expressed this obstacle as a 'fear' reveals the tension around the roles of husband and father as markers of the attainment of adult manhood. A man's ultimate manliness was predicated on his relationship with a woman, but in discourses of civilisation and manliness the presence of women was a cause of anxiety. While they were essential in the formation of polite society, too much time spent in their company could undermine manliness.⁵² This anomalous position that women could hold for men – being at the same time a marker of successful adult manhood and a threat to their manliness – was seemingly altered in the Australian colonies where there were so few of them: a ratio of three men to one woman in 1788, five to one in 1822, and gradually evening out but not balanced until into the twentieth century.⁵³

Perhaps it was due to their lack that the 'society of females' elicited thankfulness rather than anxiety in men's comments from the colonies. Ship's surgeon John Price was very pleased to be invited to a large dinner at Governor Hunter's on his arrival in Sydney in 1800, an occasion 'enlivened, graced & adorned with the presence of the most amiable ladies in the colony'. Explorer Edward Eyre commented on the pleasurable company of

⁴⁹ UKNA, HO 47/8/5 190.

⁵⁰ Mary Ann Wyndham to George Wyndham, 23 July 1830, Extracts from Dinton-Dalwood letters, 1827-1853, ML, MSS 1657, CY 3815.

⁵¹ *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, 7 February 1829.

⁵² Michèle Cohen, 'Manners' Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 44 (April), 2005, p. 320.

⁵³ Angela Woollacott, 'Gender and Sexuality', in Deryck M Schreuder and Stuart Ward (eds), *Australia's Empire*, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 315; Katrina Alford, *Production or Reproduction? An Economic History of Women in Australia, 1788-1850*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1984, p. 16.

women wherever he went. In Western Australia in the 1840s, barrister Edward Landor described scenes of domestic comfort and conviviality: men reading the *Quarterly Review*, *The Times* and *Punch*, women relishing the *Illustrated London News*, and all enjoying light-hearted family parties.⁵⁴

South Australian public servant William Smillie went so far as to claim a debt to 'the ladies of our colony' for the 'good humour and forbearance' with which they bear the few inconveniences incidental to the life of a first settler'. Their presence was welcome because '[a]fter the exertions of the day, we have the pleasures of society and conversation'.⁵⁵ A settler's life tended to mean carelessness or indifference to 'the little proprieties and observances of civilised life', 'keeping up good old English habits' was seen as a woman's role.⁵⁶ As historian Linda Young has observed, the 'symbolism of the genteel woman bearing the snowy tablecloth to the ends of the earth is potent. Crisp cleanliness demarcated culture from nature; pure whiteness marked the power of humans over the environment; the fabric layer that separated the meal from the rude table demonstrated the power of gentility over barbarism'.⁵⁷

Leaving aside Smillie's trivialisation of settler women's lives in the phrase 'few inconveniences', his gratitude reveals not only a concern for the potential loss of civilisation as part of life in the Australian colonies, but also a desire on the part of men for balance. The equilibrium that men sought in order to maintain their physical health, was similarly looked for between their working and domestic lives: primitive manual work was offset by the civilisation of their domestic lives. Although manual labour could be offered as a corrective to unmanly sedentary pursuits, it was also associated with the lower classes, and with a lack of civilisation: it could be seen as regenerative and degenerative. This was a problem for authors promoting emigration. It meant trying to describe the physical labour of a settler's life as not too onerous but still beneficial. 'It was frequently a subject of remark to me', wrote one, 'how much leisure the New South Wales settler (farmer) seemed possessed of, compared with the business-classes in

⁵⁴ 18 January 1800, John Washington Price, *A Journal kept on board the Minerva Transport from Ireland to New South Wales*, by J. W. Price, Surgeon, BL, ADD MS 13880, pp. 72-73; Edward Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative of Residence and Exploration in Australia 1832-1839*, Caliban Books, London, 1984 (1859), pp. 39, 27-28, 84, 113; Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, pp. 122-124, 12.

⁵⁵ William Smillie, *"The Great South Land:" Four Papers on Emigration, Designed to Exhibit the Principles and Progress of the New Colony of South Australia*, Simpkin & Marshall and JC Hailes, London, 1838, p. 20.

⁵⁶ Eyre, *Autobiographical Narrative*, p. 39; see also Landor, *The Bushman*, p. 247.

⁵⁷ Linda Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century: America, Australia and Britain*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, 2003, p. 188.

towns'. Becoming carried away, the author then wrote that, 'The settler's seemed to me a life of almost idleness;' and realising his mistake the author back-pedaled to say, 'his time seemed at all events just sufficiently occupied to prevent *ennui*, and his occupations are of the most healthful descriptions'.⁵⁸

We saw in chapter five that literature promoting emigration and official discussions about suitable settlers invariably nominated married men as the most successful. They described how married men fared better in terms of 'cheerfulness' while a single man's life was 'comfortless'.⁵⁹ Missionary James Backhouse observed during his travels that settlers in both rural and city areas benefited in having a wife, and similar thoughts were confided to journals and diaries. Charles Boydell, who arrived in New South Wales in 1826 as a young man around eighteen years of age, displayed his anxiety about degeneration when he told his journal that a 'Single Settler' was 'just exalted above the Aboriginal:' coming home 'after a hard days labour' to 'a miserable hut without a soul to meet & welcome him' and a 'rough & uncomfortable meal' was 'sufficient' to turn a man into 'a most unthinking being'. It was a situation easily remedied, he told himself, without punctuation: 'just take a wife my boy & immediately turn a desert into a fruitful garden a miserable abode into an Elysium'.⁶⁰ The disproportionate ratio of men to women meant, however, that many men had to return to Britain to marry, if they could afford to. After two years in New South Wales, former apprentice Cornish wool stapler, George Hawke was able to buy his own land. He 'laboured on for several years, patiently and industriously' until he thought he had 'a fair prospect of supporting a wife comfortably', and then he returned to England to marry his cousin who accompanied him back.⁶¹

This imbalance between men and women had been anticipated in Denis Vairasse d'Allais' fictional history of the Sevarites in 1679, when a storm left Captain Siden and his crew and passengers stranded on the coast of 'Terræ australes incognitæ'. Recognising that the women among the group 'would be the occasion of trouble and mischief', the elected 'Captain General' devised a solution to distribute twenty four women among three hundred men. Officers were able to choose a woman exclusively and the rest were divided up so that every man 'not past fifty years of Age, might have

⁵⁸ Anon, *Twenty Years Experience*, Smith, Elder & co, London, 1839, p. 49.

⁵⁹ Anon, *A Month in the Bush of Australia*, J Cross; Simpkin and Marshall, London, 1838, p. 53; repeated in Anon, *Twenty Years Experience*, p. 49.

⁶⁰ James Backhouse, *A Narrative of A Visit to the Australian Colonies*, Hamilton, Adams and Co, London, 1843, p. 451; Charles Boydell, Journal, pp. 123a-124a.

⁶¹ George Hawke, Journal of an early Cornish settler in NSW, ML, A1938 CY1156, pp. 55-64.

his woman-bedfellow every fifth night'.⁶² Men and women in the Australian colonies may not have practiced this 'multiplicity of Husbands' but they did form connubial arrangements other than church-sanctified marriage, often beginning on the voyage out. A common practice was for sailors to take 'wives' from among the female convicts who enjoyed privileges from such arrangements. Ship's surgeon John Price noted that 'in all these matrimonial engagements, they dispensed with the usual ceremonies' but 'they drank a good quantity of grog on the occasion'.⁶³

There were pragmatic reasons for these 'engagements', as there were for similar subsequent arrangements on shore, but they were not necessarily lacking in affection or commitment. A man like George Prideaux Harris was glad to find a wife and thus avoid the temptation of taking a 'temporary one' from among the convicts and servants: 'thank God', he told his mother, 'I have escaped that rock & got safe in to the harbour of happiness'.⁶⁴ But some men must not have thought of their ship-board 'wives' as quite so impermanent. Eleven of the sailors, including three petty officers, on Price's ship were left in Sydney. Price could not think of 'any inducement these men as sailors had to stop here for, unless for the company of the wretched women that cohabitated with them on the voyage'.⁶⁵ Sailor John Nicol wrote tenderly and passionately about Sarah Whitlam his convict partner on the *Lady Julian*, who gave birth to their son before they reached Port Jackson where they were separated. Though Nicol searched for her he did not see Whitlam or their son again. Nicol's description of the cousin he subsequently married in Scotland was in stark contrast.⁶⁶

There was some official acknowledgement of *de facto* relationships, from governor Arthur Phillip's acceptance that cohabitation was sufficient to add a 'wife's' twenty acres to a man's thirty to make up the family farm where they could both labour, to governor William Bligh's admission that when a man lived and had children with a woman he was acting as 'fathers do'. Bligh also distinguished between pregnancies resulting from casual sexual encounters and long-term cohabitation.⁶⁷ But there were

⁶² Denis Vairasse d'Allais, *Histoire des Sevarambes*, Henry Brome, London, 1679, pp. 44-50.

⁶³ Price, Journal, p. 37.

⁶⁴ Harris to his mother, 12 October 1805, Miscellaneous letters and papers, Leaf 28-31.

⁶⁵ Price, Journal, p. 77.

⁶⁶ John Nicol, *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol Mariner*, Cassell & Company, London, 1937 (1822), pp. 127-144, 210.

⁶⁷ Marian Aveling, 'Imagining New South Wales as a Gendered Society 1783-1821', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. (25), 1992, p. 7; Tina Picton Phillipps, 'Family Matters: Bastards, Orphans and Baptisms – New South Wales, 1810-1825', *Journal of Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 90 (2), December, 2004,

also many official moves to overcome the apparent resistance to lawful wedlock. Soldiers and sailors had to marry the women they were living with if they were to take them to Britain. Governor Lachlan Macquarie issued a proclamation on the 'subversion of Decency and Decorum' in *de facto* relationships and the practical wisdom of marriage, especially for women who had no claim on their 'husband's' property if he died intestate. However, for the property-less this was of little significance and for women with their own property, the transfer of it to husbands should they marry may have actually been a disincentive. Moreover, unofficial wives of husbands without other blood relations in the colonies to contest inheritance were reasonably safe, and this was the case for most convicts and ex-convicts in the early days of the colonies.⁶⁸

Another provocation to resist marriage may have been that convicts required permission to marry, which turned marriage into an indulgence, a reward for good behaviour and a form of control. And when governor William Bligh prevented men from taking convict women directly from the ships without marrying them, women who had left lawful husbands in Britain had to declare themselves 'widows'.⁶⁹ Thus official regulation and promotion of marriage, along with a limited acceptance of unsanctioned arrangements, sat uneasily with men and women's pragmatic responses to needs for material security and comfort and emotional and physical intimacy, resulting in *de facto* couples and bigamous relationships.

Extralegal and illegal outcomes were not necessarily a result of any peculiar circumstances in the Australian colonies. In Britain where there was no legal divorce until 1857, the lower classes had a long tradition of 'self-marriage' and 'self-divorce' that created similar results. 'Acceptable' bigamy (where there were understandable reasons for the breakdown of the first marriage, where the bigamist was honest with the second spouse, and where fathers continued to provide for children of the previous marriage) was tolerated by neighbours and kin and judges showed reluctance to impose harsh punishments in such cases. Historian Ginger Frost believes judges may have realised that most people involved in bigamous unions did not intend to subvert matrimony: that men and women's willingness to take risks in creating family units

pp. 123-124; Report from the Select Committee on Transportation, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1812 (341), Appendices, p. 32.

⁶⁸ Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 1 – The Beginning*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, pp. 326-329.

⁶⁹ Snowdon, 'Convict Marriage', p. 64-66.

actually showed the significance of the practice.⁷⁰ It is understandable, then, that the Australian colonies were represented as a place where men had an opportunity of ‘founding... a family of their own’.⁷¹ It seemed to be a hope that cut across class, shared by convicts, ex-convicts, free settlers of various social backgrounds, and young, well-educated gentlemen with few prospects in Britain.

Absent fathers?

Conceptions of ‘fatherhood’ are even more difficult to articulate for the period of this study than conceptions of ‘family’. Much of what John Locke and William Godwin recommended in their child-raising advice, discussed in chapter three, could be undertaken as efficiently by a tutor or teacher for whom parental affection played no part in the care of their charges. William Cobbett, on the other hand, was adamant that ‘Being fond of little children argues no *effeminacy* in a man’, and he played a large part in the daily care of his children from the time they were babies.⁷² John Tosh, however, finds Cobbett’s tone ‘nostalgic’, and ‘derived from his awareness that the “nursing father” was already a figure of the past’. Tosh says that there is no shortage of evidence to point to the origins of ‘absent’ fatherhood in the first half of the nineteenth century in Britain, as recent work on American families has shown to be the case there.⁷³

It would be worth querying, however, if the ‘present’ father was another of those golden age myths; something else that was felt to be lost among the effects of increasing urbanisation and industrialisation. Stress on the benefits and enjoyments of fatherhood in so much literature of the early nineteenth century may reveal not so much that men needed to be persuaded about fatherhood, the conclusion of Davidoff and Hall, as that new conceptions of fatherhood were emerging alongside new conceptions of children and childhood.⁷⁴ What had not changed, however, was the integral role that establishing and maintaining a family played in the successful attainment of adult manhood. During the strained economic post-war period in early nineteenth-century

⁷⁰ Ginger Frost, ‘Bigamy and Cohabitation in Victorian England’, *Journal of Family History*, vol. 22 (3), July, 1997, pp. 286-306.

⁷¹ Landor, *The Bushman*, p. 244.

⁷² William Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, p. 212.

⁷³ Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, p. 138, 129.

⁷⁴ Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 333.

Britain, many middling-class men were unable to maintain a family on their income alone. This had always been the case for lower-class men, but they were not expected to do so – other members of the family also contributed to household income. In the Australian colonies, government policies arguably made it difficult for lower-class men to establish families even on these terms.⁷⁵

Despite the tendency of earlier Australian colonial historiography to create a picture of an unusually large number of parentless children as would be expected in a penal colony, there is ample evidence that orphanages were not full of parentless or neglected children. Some had both parents alive, many were from single-parent families, often destitute and headed by mothers.⁷⁶ A significant proportion of them returned from the orphanages to the care of their parents. The situation was a result of government authorities, on the one hand, removing children from allegedly depraved parents, and parents, on the other hand, using the orphanages for temporary care while the family's fortunes improved. Admission applications were likely to have been written to invoke pity but they were not necessarily false accounts of parents' misfortunes, and orphanage admission books provide little evidence of parental abandonment. Between 1820 and 1841, only around 8.5 per cent of the colony's children lived outside their family, and that figure is lower than the rate in Australia in 1991.⁷⁷

'Orphan' was also a legal category, meaning a child without a father, as under common law only fathers (of all classes) had legal authority over their children. Thus in the Australian colonies, three policies in particular combined to create 'orphans:' juveniles were transported as individuals, very young children were allowed to accompany their transported mothers, and indecision about the status of marriages performed by Catholic priests meant Catholic children (mostly Irish and comprising a third to a quarter of the convict population) were technically fatherless. The pool of such 'legally fatherless' children also included the offspring of soldiers and sailors who were absent because of the itinerant nature of their employment.⁷⁸

Government policies also emphasised material support as the critical factor in paternity, but the economic framework of the early colonies – in its mix of market

⁷⁵ Diane Snow, 'Family Policy and Orphan Schools in Early Colonial Australia', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 22 (2), 1991, p. 255.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 256-267.

⁷⁷ Belcher, 'Demographic Influences', p. 23, 28.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 261-263.

economy and government stores – made it difficult for male convicts to support families. For example, individual not family rations were issued from government stores, and there was no recognition in wage rates that men had families to support until 1819. Nor did men in the lower ranks of the military receive wages sufficient to support a family. For working-class men, which were the majority of the male population, the key to survival was to remain single for some time. Moreover, the opportunities that a market economy did offer were not conducive to either working-class or middle-class family models: larger land-owners explicitly advertised for and hired single men without encumbrances; and, land grants that came with convict labour left little place for family members to contribute to work, and so families were often left in towns while fathers oversaw this convict labour.⁷⁹ The material means of maintaining a family were only readily available to a comparatively small group of men, leaving many fathers caught between a complex economic structure and authorities' expectations of the particular type of familial life they should lead.⁸⁰

Authorities paid scant attention to the capacity of 'absent fathers' to support their families, judging them rather as unwilling to do so.⁸¹ However, Tina Picton Phillipps believes that the amount of illegitimate and neglected children in the early colonies has been overstated by historians, and the portrait of male convicts as irresponsible fathers is not supported by evidence. Few of the bastardy cases before the Sydney Bench of Magistrates between 1810 and 1814, for example, involved a father nominated as a convict. They were more likely to be named as seafaring men and the cases were thus no different from similar ones in Bristol or London or any other British port. Moreover, in the parish records that Picton Phillipps analysed, sixty six of the couples implicated in unmarried baptisms could possibly be identified as *de facto* couples, accounting for over a third of the children.⁸²

Official records also reveal that a quarter of transported convicts were married and many of them, both male and female, sought to have their families join them in the colonies, with the strength of personal relationships enduring through the years: James Sharkett transported in 1829, sent for his wife twenty years after he had left

⁷⁹ Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1987 (1958), p. 95; Snow, 'Family Policy and Orphan Schools', pp. 257-268; Janet Doust, *English Migrants to Eastern Australia 1815-1860*, PhD Thesis, The Australian National University, 2004, p. 78.

⁸⁰ Snow, 'Family Policy and Orphan Schools', p. 268.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

⁸² Tina Picton Phillipps, 'Family Matters', pp. 125-131.

Britain.⁸³ That it was men's incapacity to provide for family, rather than their unwillingness, that left wives and children unsupported is also evidenced in the provision that men of means commonly made for their illegitimate children. Robert Howe, newspaper publisher and son of a convict, and his wife Ann Bird, raised his illegitimate son (born before their marriage) with their own four children, and Phillip Gidley King, governor of New South Wales, paid for the naval education of two illegitimate sons by a convict woman.⁸⁴

Enterprising families

Historian Clive Moore is commenting on the late nineteenth century when he claims that 'life in the colonies freed migrants from extended families and allowed them to develop autonomous and anonymous personal lives unfettered by traditional restraints'.⁸⁵ It does not appear to be the case earlier in the century. Any 'flight from domesticity' was a late nineteenth-century phenomenon.⁸⁶ George Wyndham was one man who created a family of his own in New South Wales and yet that family's bonds with their family in Britain remained close and enduring. The Henty family made emigration itself a family enterprise when Thomas Henty, his wife, seven sons and a daughter, who were nearly all adults when they emigrated, arrived in the Australian colonies between 1829 and 1837. These two families illustrate how more prosperous men of the middling and upper classes were adventurous and restless not to escape family but because it was a means to the ends of securing the family future.

George Wyndham was an educated and well-travelled man who refused a post under the British government, with whose policies he disagreed. He emigrated to become a farmer, which he did successfully with experimental farming on a property he called Dalwood in the Hunter River valley. The vineyards that he planted produced wines that won bronze and silver medals at the Paris International Exhibition of 1867.

⁸³ Dianne Snowdon, 'Convict Marriage: "the best instrument of reform"', *Tasmanian Historical Studies*, vol. 9, 2004, p. 68.

⁸⁴ 21 October 1822, Robert Howe, Diary 1 August 1822 - 4 April 1823, ML, CY 2117; Snow, 'Family Policy and Orphan Schools', p. 268; AGL Shaw, 'King, Philip Gidley (1758 - 1808)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020052b.htm>>, accessed 20/5/2009.

⁸⁵ Clive Moore, 'Colonial Manhood and Masculinities', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. (56), 1998, p. 36.

⁸⁶ Tosh, *A Man's Place*, pp. 170-194; Martin Francis, 'The Domestication of the Male? Recent Research on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Masculinity', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 45 (3), 2002, pp. 637-652; Stephen Heathorn, 'How stiff were their upper lips? Research on late-Victorian and Edwardian masculinity', *History Compass*, vol. 2 (BI 093), 2004, pp. 1-7.

His wife Margaret accompanied him to New South Wales and she gave birth to eleven sons and two daughters after they arrived in the colony in 1827.⁸⁷ The letters from George's family in England show the 'English' family's emotional and material interest in George's 'Australian' family and their ventures and adventures. George's father William sent pigs and farming equipment, including a threshing machine ('four-horse power, of the best and newly improved plant'), and other members of the family sent acorns for oak trees, fabric for clothing and clothes for patterns, as well as books and newspapers.⁸⁸

George and Margaret faced hardships and George was not above doing the hard work himself. Reports arrived in England that he had been seen flaying an ox and knew how to use a washtub.⁸⁹ The family did not escape the 1840's economic depression. They weathered it by leaving Dalwood in the hands of a manager and traveling north with horses, cattle and sheep, a few stockmen and a string of covered bullock-wagons to take up a property near Kyogle. After stocking it with cattle they left it in the hands of one of the stockmen, recrossed the Dividing Range and took up a property near Inverell. By 1847 prices had risen and the party returned to Dalwood. George and Margaret and all their children – another son had been born during their journey – had undertaken a round trip of over 1000 kilometers but their financial prosperity was ensured.⁹⁰ The 'Australian' Wyndhams' harsh experiences inspired their English family's admiration, envy and contemplation of joining them. George's sister Charlotte confessed that accounts of their travels made her 'wish to have been one of the party'. His brother John wrote that it was only 'a delicate wife and four very small children' that prevented him from joining George.⁹¹ In the end some of the Wyndham sons did emigrate to Australia: William Windham, the eldest son of George's brother Alexander; Edward Windham, the son of George's brother John; and Charles, Alexander and John Codrington, sons of George's sister Laetitia.⁹²

⁸⁷ Judith Wright McKinney, 'Wyndham, George (1801 - 1870)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020576b.htm>>, accessed 20/11/2008.

⁸⁸ Laetitia Wyndham to Margaret Wyndham, 12 August 1828; Mary Ann Wyndham to Margaret Wyndham, undated; William Wyndham to George Wyndham, 12 August 1828, 7 July 1829; Charlotte Wyndham to Margaret Wyndham, 29 October 1829; Laetitia Wyndham to George Wyndham, 15 July 1829; 1 January 1830; Charlotte Wyndham to Margaret Wyndham 14 November 1830.

⁸⁹ HA Wyndham, *A Family History 1688-1837. The Wyndhams of Somerset, Sussex and Wiltshire*, Oxford University Press, London, 1950, p. 358.

⁹⁰ Judith Wright McKinney, 'Wyndham, George (1801 - 1870)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020576b.htm>>, accessed 20/11/2008.

⁹¹ Charlotte Wyndham to George Wyndham, 30 May 1845, 29 November 1845, 8 October 1830; John Wyndham to George Wyndham, 9 April 1846.

⁹² Wyndham, *A Family History*, p. 367. The spelling change of the name is unexplained.

Thomas Henty's decision to emigrate involved his whole family from the outset. A Sussex farmer and banker, Thomas was persuaded in the post-war years of the advantages of emigration because of, as he saw it, Britain's poor farming prospects. His sons James, Edward and John sailed for Swan River in 1829.⁹³ Thomas, his wife Frances, their sons Charles, Stephen, and Francis, and their daughter Jane, joined the vanguard of the family in Van Diemen's Land in 1831, where the brothers had decamped on finding such poor soil in Western Australia. James appealed to the British government for permission to exchange the large Swan River grant for a smaller one in Van Diemen's Land but free land grants had come to an end and the Henty's appeal was refused. So the family turned their attention to the enormous area of empty land across Bass Strait in the almost unknown Port Phillip district. Edward was the first to move, in 1834, with stock and a small party of men and Francis followed a month later with the first Merino sheep. The final Henty man, William, arrived in Launceston from Britain in 1837.⁹⁴ Even when the Henty family were all in the Australian colonies they were not always co-located so, as for the Wyndhams, letters maintained family bonds, assuring each other of their good health or expressing concern over each other's ill health; communicating detailed descriptions of their lands; exchanging anxieties about business speculations; congratulating marriages and mourning deaths.⁹⁵

Thomas Henty was very pleased with his 'industrious' family: 'they are united', he told John Street, 'and we are dubbed the most enterprising family in the Colony'.⁹⁶ Moreover, they had found a solution to the competing imperatives of adventure and domesticity, agricultural pursuits and mercantile trade, city and rural living, that individual men found so difficult: as a family they could combine it all. James was a banker and merchant in Britain and established successful trading ventures in the colonies. Charles, also a banker in Britain, was managing director of the Launceston branch of the Bank of Australasia. Edward had only been trained in farming and he established large sheep and cattle stations, as did John and Francis. William was a solicitor who continued to practice in Launceston. Stephen was a merchant and trader,

⁹³ Thomas Henty to James Street, 23 February 1825, Henty Papers, ML, C172, CY1572; Marnie Bassett, 'Henty, Thomas (1775 - 1839)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010493b.htm>>, accessed 29/2/2008.

⁹⁴ Marnie Bassett, 'Henty, Thomas'.

⁹⁵ Extracts of letters from Swan River, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7739, Box 117/6; Eight letters to son Edward Henty, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7739, Box 119/1 (a)-(h); Miscellaneous correspondence, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7739, Box 119/2 (e), Box 119/3.

⁹⁶ Thomas Henty to John Street, 26 December 1835, Henty Papers.

ship owner and whaler. All the 'rural' sons eventually built homes in the Portland Bay township that became Melbourne.⁹⁷ James had outlined just such a plan to Thomas soon after he arrived in the Australian colonies: 'I hope you will bear in mind', he wrote, 'that it will be a matter of very great consequence that one of the Boys or myself should settle down at the Town as a merchant as a great deal of good may be done perhaps quite as much as in agricultural pursuits the two blended will however answer best'.⁹⁸

Families across the social spectrum reached out to each other no matter how far their individual members travelled. In Dover, England, excise officer William Hall was only ninety two kilometres (around fifty seven miles) from his home village of East Grinstead, but it was a distance most often crossed by letter.⁹⁹ Lady Charlotte, wife of Charles Lennox the fourth Duke of Richmond, was regularly in touch with her large family as they went out into the world: daughters as they married and started families of their own, and sons as they partook in military campaigns overseas or ventured out to the British colonies.¹⁰⁰ Women were more often the 'Chronicle and the News Monger of the Family', and that role was appreciated: 'when I read all the outs & ins of your letters', wrote David Waugh in New South Wales to his sister Eliza, 'I think I see them all before me'.¹⁰¹ But male family members also corresponded with each other affectionately: convict Richard Taylor promised his father George, 'I will never miss an opportunity of writing to you, to inform you how I am going on, in whatever part of the world my lot may be cast'.¹⁰² Men participated willingly, eagerly, longingly, in 'a fragile chain of trans-global communication'.¹⁰³ In her edited volume on early colonial marriages, historian Penny Russell concludes that 'men, far from resenting their wives' presence or attempting to break loose from domestic constraints, welcomed, sought and indeed demanded their assistance'.¹⁰⁴ The tensions between adventurous and domestic ideals of manliness were negotiated in far more complicated ways than notions of 'escape' tend to capture.

⁹⁷ Marnie Bassett, 'Henty, Thomas (1775 - 1839)', ADB, <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010493b.htm>, accessed 29/2/2008>.

⁹⁸ James Henty to Thomas Henty, 15 November 1829, Extracts of letters from Swan River.

⁹⁹ William Hall Archives.

¹⁰⁰ Charlotte (Gordon) Duchess of Richmond, 1768-1842, Goodwood Collection, for example, MSS 354, MSS 353, MSS 363, MSS 365.

¹⁰¹ David Waugh to sister Eliza, 10 February 1835, Waugh Family Papers, 1834-1859, ML, A827, CY 812.

¹⁰² Richard Taylor to George Taylor, 4 May 1840, quoted in Bruce Hindmarsh, 'Wherever I go I will right to you', in Frost and Maxwell-Stewart (eds), *Chain Letters*, p. 175.

¹⁰³ Bruce Hindmarsh, 'Wherever I go', p. 176.

¹⁰⁴ Penny Russell, 'Introduction', in Penny Russell (ed), *For Richer, For Poorer: Early Colonial Marriages*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1994, p. 6.

The great moral chain by which society is held together

'As is usual since we came to sea', wrote John Price in his diary, 'on every Saturday night, we drank our wives and sweethearts in a bumper of punch – this is the only night in the Week that we drink punch – but we observe it very strictly and never fail paying of that tribute to those we hold so dear'.¹⁰⁵ Price and his shipmates, Londoners supporting Queen Caroline, silk mill apprentices, criminals and transportees, dukes and governors, colonial surveyors, public servants, and emigrants – all understood the 'blessings' of 'wife, children, and friends' that the song in Fairburn's *Naval Songster* honoured. 'Tho' round him Arabia's whole fragrance ascends', the merchant still thinks of them. The soldier would 'barter whole ages of glory' for 'one happy day' with them. The 'death-wounded Tar' would drop 'tears of regret' as he remembered them. But this was no celebration of tranquil domesticity, this was the 'war cry of Britons'.¹⁰⁶ There were many risks that a man could take for his family, and some could deprive them of him completely.

In the Australian colonies, the opportunities to establish a family – to have the wife and children worth fighting for – were no more available and achievable than in Britain. A man with the necessary financial means might find himself competing with wealthier men in a demographically imbalanced population that gave women a better chance of making an economically advantageous matrimonial choice. Moreover, both free emigrant men and those born in the colonies, even of convict or ex-convict parents, shunned convict women.¹⁰⁷ The result was that 10 per cent less of the adult population was married in the colonies as compared to Britain, but for men the comparison was more marked: almost 60 per cent of adult men in Britain were married, in the colonies, less than 40 per cent.¹⁰⁸ The men with the least chance of marrying were unskilled labourers, convicts and ex-convicts, the men for whom the regenerative potential of the colonies was so much remarked on in emigration literature, proposals for colonisation, and parliamentary reports. Men like George Wyndham and Thomas Henty's sons may have achieved that much sought for balance between adventuring and domesticity, but

¹⁰⁵ Price, *Journal*, p. 37.

¹⁰⁶ *Fairburn's Naval Songster, Or Jack Tar's Chest of Conviviality, For 1806.*, John Fairburn, London, 1806, pp. 39-40.

¹⁰⁷ Belcher, 'Demographic Influences', pp. 12, 14.

¹⁰⁸ Alford, *Production or Reproduction?*, p. 26.

the high proportion of single men in destitute asylums in the second half of the nineteenth century,¹⁰⁹ showed how precarious that pursuit could be.

Language, says historian Michael Roper, tells us of the primacy of familial relationships in the 'formations of masculinity' when 'fraternal' and 'paternal' are commonly used descriptors of the ways in which men's relationships operate within public organisations and institutions. The bonds between men and the structures of public life were not forged in *opposition* to home, but in *relation* to it.¹¹⁰ It was a widely-held view that work was to support family and social obligations, it was not an end in itself.¹¹¹ 'Work' in an industrialising and commercialising society necessitated time away from home: daily in fields, factories and professional offices; for months at a time on military manoeuvres or mercantile sea voyages or stock-keeping out 'bush'; perhaps for years when exploring the ends of the world. But it did not negate men's desire for, and investment in family, or the role of family in their sense of themselves. Even convicts showed 'independence and cunning' in negotiating bureaucratic regulations around their eligibility to marry.¹¹² Men's endeavours to remain part of families, make families and maintain families in the face of economic necessities and circumstances, including government policies, that made this difficult, attest to the significance of family.¹¹³

As the Crusoe story illustrated, men's association with family and domesticity was highly complex, but it was Crusoe's reaction to the death of his wife that illuminated the heart of the matter: she was the 'Stay of all [his] Affairs, the Center of all [his] Enterprizes', and her death drove him back to his 'wandering (sic) Disposition'; without her he was 'a Ship without a Pilot, that could only run afore the Wind'.¹¹⁴ Families were the incentive to take risks and the reward for doing so, the reason for leaving and the reason for returning. That is the paradox of families.

¹⁰⁹ Pat Jalland, *Australian Ways of Death: A Social and Cultural History 1840-1918*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2002, p. 204.

¹¹⁰ Michael Roper, 'Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 59, 2005, pp. 67-68; Michael Roper, 'Maternal Relations: Moral Manliness and Emotional Survival in Letters Home During the First World War', in Stefan Dudink, Hagemann, Karen and Tosh, John (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2004, p. 308.

¹¹¹ Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 207.

¹¹² Alan Atkinson, 'Convicts and courtship', in Penny Russell (ed), *Families in Colonial Australia*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1985, p. 28.

¹¹³ Belcher, 'Demographic Influences', p. 22.

¹¹⁴ Daniel Defoe, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, W Taylor, London, 1719, pp. 8-9.

Marriage may have been seen as 'the great moral chain by which society is held together',¹¹⁵ and families exhorted to ensure the chain was not broken,¹¹⁶ but family ties were more complex than can be described in either images of secure domestic moorings or bindings that held men back from the wider world. Many men, like Crusoe, were 'restless to go abroad' when at home and 'restless to be at Home' once they were abroad,¹¹⁷ and if we take 'Home' to be the private sphere and 'abroad' to be the public sphere (that is the world of business and politics as much as the world across the seas) we can see John Tosh's point that 'men operated at will in *both* spheres'. But this was not simply, as Tosh puts it, their 'privilege'.¹¹⁸ The movement between home and abroad was as much a duty, a responsibility, and a financial necessity, as a desire for individual fulfillment.

¹¹⁵ *The Queen's Case Stated*, London, 1820, quoted in Louise Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial in the Queen Caroline Affair of 1820', *Gender & History*, vol. 20 (2), August, 2008, p. 253

¹¹⁶ Elizabeth Beard, Letter, ESRO, AMS 5774/4/10.

¹¹⁷ Defoe, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, p. 250.

¹¹⁸ John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire*, Pearson Longman, Harlow, England, 2005, p. 71.

Chapter 9:

The English Ulysses and the Australian Legend – becoming nations, becoming men

**The energising myth — The national mystique — The chief strength of the nation
— A community of soldiers — True manhood — Clinging to the old things**

In 1884, Francis Henty made some notes for the speech he was to give at the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the landing of his brother Edward Henty at Portland Bay.¹ The whispers of Crusoe in these notes – the five week sea voyage in ‘almost continuous westerly gales, often driven back, nearly wrecked on one occasion’ – become shouts in an article in *The Argus* anticipating the event. Bad weather drove Edward’s ship to shelter in the bay where he ‘was struck with the natural capacities’ of the land that ‘was to be had for the taking’. Edward became ‘the first white man to settle on these shores – the pioneer settler of Victoria. He built the first house... he ploughed the first acres; he planted the first vine; he owned the first horse, the first head of cattle; he sheared the first sheep..’. Thomas Henty and his seven sons, said the article’s author, would have been successful ‘merchants, woolbrokers, whalers, lawyers, and bankers’ but it was ‘the restless spirit of young Edward’ which made the family name ‘more notable in the history of Australia’. There are Biblical echoes in the story as well, when Edward’s party, Noah-like, ‘landed 13 heifers, four working bullocks, five pigs, two turkeys, two guineau fowls, six dogs, four “indentured” servants, a plough, seeds, plants, vines, apple and fruit trees of different kinds, a fishing boat, and a net’.²

But it is Robinson Crusoe’s industry and self-reliance invoked as the ‘young pioneer commenced work at once’ laying out his garden planting his vines and fruit trees, sowing his vegetables, putting together ‘the first plough that ever broke Victorian soil’ and welding ‘with his own hands the chains by which it was drawn’. ‘Looking back’, said *The Argus* author, ‘the most extraordinary thing is that the pioneer was a young Englishman not 25 years of age, with only slight “colonial experience” in Tasmania and

¹ Francis Henty, Speech delivered on the 50th anniversary of his brother Edward Henty landing at Portland Bay on 19 November 1834, Henty Family Papers, SLV, MS7739, Box 118/5(b).

² ‘Henty anniversary’, *The Argus*, 15 November 1884.

yet that as a settler he made the most perfect success of any man who has attempted to develop fresh fields and pastures in Australia'. By the time Major Mitchell arrived on the shores of Portland Bay in 1836, 'civilisation may be said to have been already established'. And this was achieved despite paying 'neither tithe nor toll to Caesar'. The celebration itself, 'the Henty Jubilee', was attended by the governor, by the Duke of Manchester, representatives of the militia and friendly societies and some 2000 school children, making around 5000 people in all. The Victorian Navy was in the bay, '[a]ddresses were presented... people cheered, the gunboats fired'.³ And so in this, and similar events in the decades of jubilees and centenaries that followed, the spirit of Crusoe in his industriousness and resourcefulness as well as his adventuring, restless spirit, was woven into the myths of an emerging Australian nation.

Newspaper articles about the 'Henty Jubilee' raised some important aspects of the relationship between men and nations generally, as well as specifically for Australia. Firstly, the inextricable link between men and nations, between individual men's bodies and the body of the nation, that pervaded eighteenth-century political rhetoric was maintained: as *The Sydney Morning Herald* explained, 'A fiftieth birthday is a notable event in the career of a nation as of a man'.⁴ Secondly, *The Argus* author applauding Edward Henty's independence as a settler termed himself 'The Vagabond' underscoring how two facets of the Crusoe character became part of Australia's founding stories in the 'bushman' and the 'pioneer', particularly in the works of writers like Banjo Paterson and Henry Lawson in the 1890s. And thirdly, in relegating Edward Henty to a golden age already disappearing, these reports revealed the perceived impossibility of achieving a secure sense of identity, whether of manliness or of nation, in a modernising world. Just as Britain's robust, independent peasant had been lost in an industrialising and commercialising world at the turn of the nineteenth century, the way of life created by 'the ideal colonist' Edward Henty, had since been 'overtopped' by the '[g]old fevers and speculative crazes' that instituted 'the life now dominant in Australia' at the turn of the twentieth century. The 'independent, self-reliant' Henty belonged with the 'giants in the sea', the great whales, who 'in those days' were 'undisturbed by the traffic of the ships'.⁵

³ 'Henty anniversary', *The Argus*, 15 November 1884.

⁴ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 November 1884.

⁵ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 November 1884; Edward Curr said the squatter was 'too lively a bird' whose 'shining light' was put out by 'lawyers and courts', Edward M Curr, *Recollections of Squatting in Victoria, Then Called the Port Phillip District (From 1841 to 1851)*, Facsimile edition, 1968, George Robertson, Melbourne, 1883, p. 9.

This chapter traces the emergence of ‘metanarratives’, the stories that give coherence to identities, both personal and collective – that turn the arbitrary and contingent into something that seems natural and given, that give meaning to being a man and being a nation.⁶ The significant feature of metanarratives is that although they are essentially fictional and cannot be empirically verified, they are ‘true’ in the sense that people believe them to be so and act on them as if they were. Metanarratives inform the writing of history, and therefore our general understanding of the past and of how the past relates to the present and the future.⁷ In Britain during the nineteenth century, the dominant narrative was, arguably, adventure fiction, the ‘energizing myth’ of British imperialism, as literary theorist Martin Green describes it, in which *Robinson Crusoe* played a pivotal role.⁸ In Australia at the end of the nineteenth century the stories underpinning a shared sense of national identity were the ‘bushman’, the wandering, independent pastoral worker, and the ‘pioneer’, the independent settler who endured the hardships of being ‘first’ to tame the landscape. Both were evolutions of the Crusoe story and its ambiguities for men.

Such stories played a role in men’s understanding of what successful manliness entailed. And, as men and nations are homologous, it is not surprising that the criteria for reaching manhood and nationhood are similar: independence, self-reliance, responsibility for dependents, and the unfortunate need for something to be defined in opposition to, that is, women and lesser men and other nations. That both manhood and nationhood need to be obtained, that they are not a given, leaves room for failure which was often expressed, and unfortunately still is, as fear that the physically robust, independent men requisite for a successful nation are figures of a former age.

The energising myth

The stories that British men told themselves – that helped the English, the Scots, the Welsh, and to a lesser extent the Irish, to think of themselves as ‘British’ – came from histories, biographies, travel literature and novels, and the conflation, discussed in chapter four, of genres that barely distinguished between fact and fiction. A nationalist

⁶ Deborah Bird Rose, ‘Rupture and the Ethics of Care in Colonized Space’, in Tim Bonyhady and Tom Griffiths (eds), *Prehistory to Politics: John Mulvaney, the Humanities and the Public Intellectual*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p. 194.

⁷ Gregory Melleuish, ‘Metahistory Strategies in Nineteenth-Century Australia’, *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 1 (2), August, 1998, p. 82.

⁸ Martin Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire*, Basic Books Inc, New York, 1979, p. 3.

historiography was evident in the works of historians like Catherine Macaulay, John Millar, John Whitaker, John Pinkerton, and Roberta Macfarlane, which were part of burgeoning scholarly and antiquarian research that searched for a common past, a common moral, social, cultural and political makeup, to underpin a 'British' community. The title of John Pinkerton's 1772 book, *Genuine History of the Britons Asserted*, makes this aim clear.⁹ The work of antiquarians, concerned as it was with domestic antiquities rather than those of Greece or Rome, took on patriotic importance in establishing the earliest history of national origins. The Romans were, after all, foreign invaders who had conquered the native inhabitants from whom modern British men could trace their descent. Antiquarian research portrayed the civilising influence of Rome as gained at the cost of loss of liberty and independence, enabling the ancient Britons to be seen not so much as barbarians but as hardy, courageous and virtuous in opposition to the effeteness and decadence of the men of the late Roman Empire.¹⁰

Novels, too, inspired a new sense of group identity, not simply 'patriotism' which is an older feeling of group loyalty directed against outsiders threatening the group, but 'nationalism' which is a far more complex, historically conditioned feeling that also looks inwards to a group's own political, cultural and social make-up.¹¹ Walter Scott did this for Scotsmen, James Fenimore Cooper did it for Americans, and Daniel Defoe did it for the English.¹² But Daniel Defoe was just as interested in promoting a vision of a united British nation.¹³ He was one of the agents sent to Scotland by the English government in 1706 to work for acceptance of the treaty of union the following year. But in the longer term, it was his novel *Robinson Crusoe*, first published in 1719, rather than his political pamphlets that became entangled in British national identity. The political creation of Great Britain, the beginning of the rise of the British empire and the progenitor of adventure fiction are all dated to this point in time at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. And it was adventure fiction, the

⁹ Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830*, St Martin's Press, New York, 1987, pp. 114-115, 117.

¹⁰ Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Hambledon and London, London, 2004, p xviii, 119-121, xiv, xx.

¹¹ Terence Bowers, 'Reconstituting the National Body in Smollett's *Travels through France and Italy*', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 21 (1), 1997, p. 15.

¹² Martin Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, 1990, p. 7.

¹³ Katherine Clark, *Daniel Defoe: The Whole Frame of Nature, Time and Providence*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2007, pp. 92-94.

'light reading' of British men for two hundred or so years after *Robinson Crusoe*, that was the 'energizing myth' of British imperialism.¹⁴

Literary theorist Martin Green has given us the 250 year long story of the telling and retelling of the Robinson Crusoe story, how it grew and changed, 'responding to new national settings, to events like the Great Wars, and to ideas, like Marxism', and created the semblance of a continuous story of men and adventure and nations. For Green the significance of adventure fiction extends beyond literature, to culture, even to politics. '[H]istorically speaking', he writes, it is the most important of all literary forms, reflecting, communicating, intensifying, perhaps even inspiring, the 'expansive imperialist thrust of the white race'.¹⁵

Just as significantly, adventure stories are 'reading for men, not for readers', and thus can also be seen as the 'liturgy – the series of cultic texts' of what Green calls 'masculinism', an 'intensification of male pride that began in the seventeenth century'. And of all the literary genres, romance and its essential plot of adventure, is the form closest to wish fulfillment. Its distinctive characteristic is, according to literary theorist Northrop Frye, 'extraordinarily persistent nostalgia, its search for some kind of imaginative golden age in time or space'. Adventure fiction was, therefore, both a myth of, and a wish for 'risk and movement and expansion, material as well as moral' in the lives of individual men as well as nations, and the 'spirit of adventure' was felt in the army and navy, in giant industries and aggressive trading, in schools which produced administrators for the empire, in education books, and even in the churches, in the work of missionaries.¹⁶

In the mid-nineteenth century Henry Mayhew attested to the endurance of fiction. He found that the most popular purchases by working men from street bookstalls were the standard classics of the eighteenth century: *Rasselas*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Tom Jones*, Goldsmith's histories, *A Sentimental Journey*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Philip Quarll*, *Telemachus*, *Gil Blas*, the letters of Junius, and the 'poetical works' of Shakespeare, Pope, James Thomson, Oliver Goldsmith, William Cowper, Robert Burns, Lord Byron and Walter Scott. Bound volumes of periodicals like *Spectator*, *Tatler*, *Guardian*, *Adventurer*, and *Rambler*, from the same

¹⁴ Green, *Dreams of Adventure*, pp. 3, 5; Paula R Backscheider, 'Defoe, Daniel (1660?–1731)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/7421>>, accessed 1 July 2010.

¹⁵ Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁶ Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, pp. 1-2, 5-6; Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 1973, p. 186.

period also sold well. So original adventure stories were read along with newer reiterations and retellings of those stories. And the connection between adventure fiction and imperialism increased as the nineteenth century progressed, as exemplified in the works of the likes of Robert Louis Stevenson and Henry Rider Haggard.¹⁷

There was, historian John Tosh tells us, only a thin dividing line separating this fantasy world from Britain's actual empire. 'And', writes Tosh, 'for every young man who was prompted by the imperial fervour of the day to seek his fortune in the colonies, there were hundreds of others who were happy to escape for a while from the routines of domesticity in to the make-believe of a frontier of the imagination'.¹⁸ Fantasy much of it may have been, but the expanding empire was significant in accommodating the Scots and the other non-English men in the growing sense of British national identity. From the late eighteenth century, the Scots, the Scots-Irish, and the Anglo-Irish, in particular, played a part in the conquest, exploration, and, above all, government of the empire in numbers quite disproportionate to their total numbers in Britain itself.¹⁹ And all men benefited from portrayals of colonial conquest as a manly occupation which provided wealth, strength, virtue, independence and self-reliance to both individuals and the nation.²⁰

Adventure fiction was, therefore, a common reference point and sometimes prompt to action, between men as disparate as East India Company writer Alexander Dalrymple, Catholic bishop William Ullathorne, barrister Edward Landor, thief James Hardy Vaux, and natural scientist Charles Darwin. Dalrymple joined the East India Company in 1752, inspired to travel after reading John Nieuhoff's factual, *Voyages and Travels Into Brasil And The East-Indies*, 1703, and Edward Kimber's fictional, *The Life and Adventures of Joe Thompson, A Narrative founded on Fact. Written by Himself*, 1750, in which the protagonist's eventful voyage to the East Indies reads like a cross between Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Smollett's *Roderick Random*.²¹ Ullathorne, the

¹⁷ Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor: The Condition and Earnings of Those That Will Work, Cannot Work, and Will Not Work. Vol 1. London Street-Folk*, Charles Griffin and Company, London, 1864 (1851), pp. 317-318; Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, Yale University Press, London, 2001, p. 120.

¹⁸ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*, Yale University Press, London, 1999, pp. 174-177.

¹⁹ Linda Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 31, October, 1992, p. 324.

²⁰ Kathleen Wilson, 'The Good, The Bad, and The Impotent: Imperialism and the Politics of Identity in Georgian England', in Ann Bermingham and John Brewer, (eds), *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p. 255.

²¹ Edward Kimber, *The Life and Adventures of Joe Thompson, A Narrative founded on Fact. Written by Himself. Volumes 1 and 2*, John Hinton, London, 1775 (1750); George Mackaness, *Alexander Dalrymple's*

Roman Catholic bishop of Birmingham in the mid-nineteenth century, spent the 1830s in the Australian colonies and attributed his love of the sea to his childhood passion for *Robinson Crusoe*.²² Landor was an emigrant animated by the 'spirit of adventure' who knew little about Western Australia but fancied it would be something like Crusoe's island.²³ Vaux '[l]ike Robinson Crusoe' had a 'strong predilection for rambling into foreign countries' and 'a longing desire to go to sea'. which he fulfilled with time in the navy and transportation to New South Wales – three times.²⁴ And Darwin preferred to read Byron, Scott and travel and adventure stories than his school books. His five-year voyage on the *Beagle* took him round the world, including to Australia. By the mid-nineteenth century, the 'exploratory voyage, often lonely and perilous' was both a reality for scientists like Darwin, and a defining metaphor of the profession for its land-bound members.²⁵

The sustained continuity and reach of adventure fiction, its themes, and its, albeit mixed, messages for men can be seen in two snap shots. The first is James Joyce's 1912 lecture on Daniel Defoe, which was printed in 1964 in the American journal series *Buffalo Studies*. Joyce was a great admirer of Defoe, owned all his works and had read every line of them. He credited Defoe as the 'father of the English novel' and he noted in this lecture Defoe's 'truly national spirit', he was the 'first English author to write without imitating or adapting foreign works'.²⁶ The lecture was written while Joyce worked on his own *Ulysses* and it eloquently summarises Robinson Crusoe's place in the British national psyche which Joyce found simultaneously enthralling and repellant.

Crusoe, said Joyce, was the answer to how a 'mongrel breed' on a 'small island in the northern sea' had achieved 'unlimited world conquest'. European caricature of the British, wrote Joyce, as 'an exaggerated man with the jaws of an ape, checkered

"A Serious Admonition to the Public on the Intended Thief Colony at Botany Bay" With A Memoir, Review Publications, Dubbo, 1943 (1979), p. 6; Andrew S Cook, 'Dalrymple, Alexander (1737–1808)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7044>>, accessed 1 July 2010.

²² Judith F Champ, 'Ullathorne, William (1806–1889)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27985>>, accessed 28/3/2008.

²³ Edward W Landor, *The Bushman; or, Life in a New Country*, Richard Bentley, London, 1847, p. 10.

²⁴ James Hardy Vaux, *Memoirs of James Hardy Vaux, A Swindler and Thief*, Whittaker, Treacher, and Arnot, London, 1830, p. 5; Averil F Fink, 'Vaux, James Hardy (1782 - 1841+)', ADB,
<<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020503b.htm>> accessed 2/3/2009.

²⁵ Iain McCalman, *Darwin's Armada: How Four Voyagers to Australasia Won the Battle for Evolution and Changed the World*, Penguin Group (Australia), Camberwell, Victoria, 2009, p. 19; Richard Holmes, *The Age of Wonder: How the Romantic Generation discovered the Beauty and Terror of Science*, HarperPress, London, 2008, p. xvi.

²⁶ James Joyce, 'Daniel Defoe', *Buffalo Studies*, vol. 1 (1), December, 1964, pp. 3-5, 7, 24-25; Frank Bugden, *James Joyce and the Making of ULYSSES*, Bloomington, 1960, p. 186.

clothes that are too short and too tight, and enormous feet; or the traditional John Bull, the corpulent trader with the fatuous, rubicund moonface and the diminutive top-hot' could not have 'conquered a hand-breadth of ground in a thousand ages'. That is why Robinson Crusoe is 'the true symbol of the British conquest'. Cast away on a desert island with 'a knife and a pipe' in his pocket, Crusoe 'becomes an architect, a carpenter, a knife-grinder, an astronomer, a baker, a shipwright, a potter, a saddler, a farmer, a tailor, an umbrella-maker, and a clergyman'. 'The whole Anglo-Saxon spirit is in Crusoe:' wrote Joyce, 'the manly independence; the unconscious cruelty; the persistence; the slow yet efficient intelligence; the sexual apathy; the practical, well-balanced religiousness; the calculating taciturnity. Whoever rereads this simple, moving book in the light of subsequent history cannot help but fall under its prophetic spell'.²⁷

The second snapshot is found in the introductory notes of a 1981 Oxford University Press edition of Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random*. Originally published in 1748, a generation after the first publication of *Robinson Crusoe*, Roderick Random was also very popular, reaching its eighth edition by 1780, a bestseller into the nineteenth century and still in print at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In this edition, Paul-Gabriel Boucé describes Smollett's hero as 'a true archetypal figure of the Ulysses-type'. He calls it 'a man's book, written mostly with men in mind' and claims that the reader can identify 'vicariously' with the hero, seduced from 'his comfortable armchair passivity' by Roderick's 'toughness', 'patience in adversity' and 'dashing gusto for life' into 'a gratifying temporary illusion of almost godlike energy and invulnerability'. The book is, writes Boucé, 'a man's world, then, not unlike Kipling's at times'.²⁸ In these examples we see the endurance of the adventure genre and its links to the classical past. We have its association with a sense of national identity. And we have the genre's explicit relationship with men and manliness being repeated by men across time.

The national mystique

Historian Russel Ward recognised this urge to recapture the past in the face of present changes that challenged and unsettled. 'From ancient Rome until today', he wrote in

²⁷ Joyce, 'Daniel Defoe', 24-25.

²⁸ Tobias Smollett, *The Adventures of Roderick Random*, Oxford University Press, London, 1981 (1748), pp. xvii, xxv.

1958, 'men have been impelled to romanticise and identify with 'outback' or 'frontier' virtues, whenever and *because* they have begun in reality to be herded together in great and growing cities'.²⁹ An article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* in 1879 was just one example. The 'discovery of Australia', it claimed, was 'as full of romance as the story of the Argonauts, with heroes 'like Jason' pressing 'beyond the boundaries' of 'geographical knowledge' in order to 'fathom the mystery of unknown seas and distant lands'.³⁰ Ward played his own role in perpetuating this tendency to appropriate older tropes of men's need for freedom in *The Australian Legend*, in which he traced and explained the development of the 'national *mystique*' or national characteristics.³¹

Ward attributed certain characteristics that he took to be peculiarly Australian, to the nineteenth-century pastoral workers, a group described by Anthony Trollope in the 1870s as a 'nomad tribe'. The distinctive ethos of these men, Ward argues, spread outwards from the Australian interior and upwards through society to subtly influence the manners and mores of the whole population. Ward's privileging of lower class men was a statistical argument based on the disproportionate amount of convicts, emancipists and 'currencies' (native-born whites) in the population until after mid-nineteenth century.³² These men made up most of the colonies' labour force at a time when labour shortages allowed their 'manly independence' – or their 'insolent insubordination' – to come to the fore. The Irish, disproportionately represented among the convicts as they were, added their anti-authoritarianism and hatred of the British government to the collection of characteristics Ward identified. After the crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813 these characteristics were tempered in the peculiar conditions of the 'interior:' the employment of casual workers by large property owners which created a semi-nomadic workforce; the hardship and loneliness of such a life which required 'mates' in order to survive; the uncivilising absence of white women and religion, and a cycle of work and drunken binges. During the Gold Rush, emigrants and newcomers to the bush encountered these pastoral workers, these 'bushmen', on the diggings and adopted their attitude to authority and their sense of mateship. Bushrangers, mainly run-away convicts and often Irish, were the embodiment of an extreme version of these two attitudes in particular. Nationalist writers in the 1890s – like Henry Lawson, Banjo Paterson and Joseph Furphy – enshrined the bushman in the popular imagination just at the time when railways and other communications

²⁹ Russel Ward, 'The Australian Legend re-visited', *Historical Studies*, vol. 18 (71), October, 1978, p. 190.

³⁰ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 September 1879.

³¹ Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1987 (1958), p. 1.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

bought the city closer to the bush, and thus the bush ethos to city people, but when the pastoral workers of the bushman myth were actually disappearing. The myth, according to Ward, became potent during World War 1 when the conditions of active service reproduced the conditions of life among the original bushmen.³³

Ward notes that a yearning for 'freedom and simplicity of life' was the attraction of the bush, and he gave eye-witness evidence to the endurance of this appeal. He met bushmen in the Northern Territory in the mid-1930s who, when asked why they stayed in the Territory, answered 'more or less articulately' in the same terms that Henry William Haygarth used in 1848: it was the 'sensation of absolute freedom, which is one of the chief attractions of this sort of life'.³⁴ The bushman's metamorphosis into the Anzac was kept alive in the rash of movies in the 1970s that dealt with the Boer War and World War 1 which were 'infused with the themes of *The Australian Legend*'. The hero of Peter Weir's film *Gallipoli*, played by Mel Gibson, was 'endowed with the prime characteristics of Russel Ward's Bushman'. He was of Irish Catholic descent, a nomadic working class young man who cared little for authority, who enlisted in the AIF to join his mate in the 'great adventure'. And this connection was made in the ongoing scholarly and popular discussion of Australia's sense of national identity, such as in the quotes just made by historian Neville Meaney.³⁵ We can draw, then, a line from Ulysses to contemporary Australian men; a line that Ward himself recognised went through Robinson Crusoe, 'the man of parts who found the good life by "returning" to "nature"', who might be understood as 'the harbinger in England of the "noble frontiersman" of the nineteenth century in America and Australia'.³⁶

Ward overlooked the role of the pioneer in the Australian popular imagination. Those men of 'excellent physique and courage', 'the first white men' who built homes by felling trees, erecting saw pits, burning lime, splitting shingles and making bricks themselves, whose 'heroic deeds' were retold with the 'glamour of romance' did not fit Ward's class-based analysis.³⁷ *The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary* gives an open-ended definition of pioneer covering 'an initiator of a new enterprise, and inventor'

³³ Eleanor Hodges gives a succinct summary of Ward's thesis in Eleanor Hodges, 'The Bushman Legend', in John Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush: The Australian Quest for Identity*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1982.

³⁴ Ward, *The Australian Legend*, p. 79.

³⁵ Neville Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian identity: The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 116, 2001, p. 89.

³⁶ Ward, *The Australian Legend*, p. 247.

³⁷ 'Green Point Estate. Celebration of the Centenary', *The Mercury*, 10 October 1908; 'Goulburn Centenary Celebrations', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 October 1920.

as well as 'an explore or settler; a colonist', and we continue to use the word flexibly today.³⁸ In Victoria and South Australia in their early years it was used to describe immigrants to the colonies and was not limited to those who settled and worked the land. Pioneers as settlers and national heroes, historian John Hirst points out, was 'the creation of poets and writers' at the same time, and by the same people, as the bushman legend.³⁹ And they, like the bushman, are a rewriting of the Crusoe story. Hirst's commendation of the pioneer legend as a 'people's' legend that includes women in no way negates this observation.⁴⁰ Robinson Crusoe was rewritten in 1812 by Swiss author Johann David Wyss as *Der Schweizerische Robinson*. Wyss incorporated missionaries (the father is a pastor), domestic virtues, and a South Pacific locale into the familiar story of industrious resourcefulness. *The Swiss Family Robinson*, translated into English in 1814, had a mother and daughters and a place for women in their own stories of adventure, but it remained 'profoundly patriarchal' and its emphasis was on the sons of the family training to be 'men' like 'Father'.⁴¹

The chief strength of the nation

The Australian colonies were seen early as a future nation: a 'young and promising nation' was identified by the 1820s which in its 'vigour' of youth, pledged 'a glorious maturity'.⁴² Australia's youth was its great advantage: it had not begun the Roman cycle of power, wealth and decline, that many commentators saw in Britain.⁴³ Poet Thomas K Hervey even envisaged Australia perpetuating 'the memory of its ancestral isle, when it shall lie a ruin'.⁴⁴ Not unexpectedly, manliness in its Australian context was entangled in calls for political representation and eventually self-government, in the same way that it was in calls for an expanded franchise in Britain. In both cases agitation for change was bound up in notions of successful manhood as a criteria for inclusion in political life, whether it was property ownership, responsibility for family, physical robustness, industry and prudence, or defence of the nation.

³⁸ Elizabeth Furniss, 'Timeline History and the Anzac Myth: Settler Narratives of Local History in a North Australian Town', *Oceania*, vol. 71 (4), June, 2001, p. 284.

³⁹ JB Hirst, 'The Pioneer Legend', in Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush*, pp. 16-17.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 29.

⁴¹ Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story*, pp. 65-77.

⁴² Editor's preface, Thomas K Hervey, *A Poetical Sketch-Book, including A Third Edition of Australia*, Edward Bull, London, 1829, pp. 179-180.

⁴³ Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 2 – Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2004, pp. 17-20.

⁴⁴ Hervey, *A Poetical Sketch-Book*, pp. 179-180.

As early as 1819 William Charles Wentworth called for 'free government', insisting on an Englishman's birthright to the 'blessings' of a 'free constitution.' Wentworth thought 'no prospects of profit to an honourable and independent mind can compensate for its loss'. He likened a man without 'rights' to a 'slave' and thus 'devoid of that noble feeling of independence which is essential to the dignity of his nature, and the due discharge of his functions'.⁴⁵ The Australian Patriotic Association, formed in 1835, similarly argued for a House of Assembly in New South Wales, as 'the assertion of their independence'.⁴⁶ That the passivity of slavery ran counter to men's physical constitution being essentially active was reflected in the language adopted by *The Sydney Morning Herald* in 1842 as it anticipated the 'first free Legislature'. The paper's editorialist saw the men of New South Wales leaving 'the stagnant waters of political vassalage' to be launched 'upon the noble expanse of constitutional liberty, public spirit, and social energy and activity'.⁴⁷

New South Wales was the first colony to gain responsible government in 1855 and the other colonies followed. However, until Federation, the Colonial Office in London retained control of areas such as foreign affairs, defence and international shipping. The Commonwealth of Australia came into being when the Federal Constitution was proclaimed on 1 January 1901. During this time, and beyond, the conflation of healthy, independent men with a healthy, independent nation endured. When *The Argus* celebrated 'The Centenary of Australian Settlement', it outlined how '[t]he small handful ha[d] become a great nation', beginning with the way in which climate contributed to 'healthfully developed bodily structure' and 'peculiarly vigorous activity' ('the physiological influence of light alone is scarcely to be overrated'), and repeating the familiar maxims that Australian men were 'taller and slenderer' than their 'British forefather[s]', and 'adventurous' and 'restless of spirit'.⁴⁸

Political radicalism in the 1890s reinvoked ideas of Australia as a community free from the deficiencies of the 'Old World'.⁴⁹ And farm schemes in the second decade of the

⁴⁵ WC Wentworth, *Statistical, Historical, and Political Description of The Colony of New South Wales*, G and W B Whittaker, London, 1978 (1819), pp. 164, 165, 399.

⁴⁶ Editorial and reprint of article from August 1835 London East India and Colonial Magazine. 'New South Wales. Petition presented by Mr. Bulwer, M.P., "Col. Napier on Civilization,"' *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 10 March 1836; William Bland, *Letters to Charles Buller, Junior, Esq., M.P. From the Australian Patriotic Association*, DL Wlech, Atlas Office, Sydney, 1849.

⁴⁷ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 December 1842.

⁴⁸ *The Argus*, 26 January 1888.

⁴⁹ They did not 'develop' at that time as Ben Wellings suggests: Ben Wellings, 'Crown and Country: Empire and Nation in Australian Nationalism, 1788-1999', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 5, 2004, p. 161.

twentieth century offered up Australia, again, as a place to send the male youth of Britain's towns and cities to improve British stock.⁵⁰ Thomas Sedgewick, a civil servant in the East End of London and organiser of one such scheme, led a committee made up of managers of boys' clubs and social workers which believed 'the only hope of certain employment and future happiness' for boys in dead-end jobs in British cities were colonial farm apprenticeships. Sedgewick wrote in letter to the Department of External Affairs in Australia of 'vast hordes of wasted boy life' in industrial Britain, and the *London Daily Express* described one young participant as benefiting from 'steady employment on the land – a healthier place than in the bakehouse'.⁵¹ 'It was pronounced', say historians Elspeth Grant and Paul Senduziuk, 'that these boys needed to be rescued from their degenerative urban environment and that the "wide open spaces" of the Dominions and physical nature of agricultural labour would regenerate their lives'.⁵²

The association of individual men and the nation is of long-standing and it was explicit in Britain throughout the period of this study. 'The condition of the great body of people in a country is the condition of the country itself', wrote Thomas Carlyle in 1843. This, he added, was 'a truism in all times'.⁵³ And so it seemed, from Daniel Defoe's 1698 investigation of the national body to discover 'from what Part of the Body, and from what ill Habit' the 'distemper of the Nation' issued, to the 1834 Report from the Select Committee on Inquiry into Drunkenness which posed intemperance as 'a great national evil' because the 'strength of the country' consists 'mainly in a vigorous and healthy population'.⁵⁴ Because there was no distinction between the state and its male citizens, both state (the body politic) and citizens (male bodies) were undone by republicanism's destined corruption. This link was a problem for radical commentators. Thus Thomas Paine's reworking of republican ideals blamed instead 'an upstart of governments' for 'un-making' men. His commercial form of republicanism, on the other

⁵⁰ Elspeth Grant and Paul Senduziuk, "'Urban Degeneration and Rural Revitalisation": The South Australian Government's Youth Migration Scheme, 1913-14', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 41 (1), 2010, p. 75.

⁵¹ Quoted in Grant and Senduziuk, 'Urban Degeneration', pp. 78, 167-168.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵³ Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present and Chartism*, Wiley and Putnam, New York, 1847, pp. 307-308.

⁵⁴ Daniel Defoe, *The Poor Man's Plea, in Relation to all the Proclamations, Declarations, Acts of Parliament, &c. Which Have been, or shall be made, or publish'd for a Reformation of Manners, and suppressing Immorality in the Nation*, London, 1698, pp. 1-2; Report from the Select Committee on Inquiry into Drunkenness, with minutes of evidence, and appendix, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1834 (559), p. 220.

hand, would morally transform the populace, bringing about what he termed a 'gigantic manliness'.⁵⁵

Despite the congratulatory rhetoric of jubilees, some commentators felt that men in Australia fared no better than their British counterparts. The Reverend W Cuthbertson gave a lecture in Sydney's Temperance Hall in 1861, based on the evidence recently taken before a select committee of the Assembly on 'the condition of the working classes in Sydney'. Their houses were, he said, of a 'very defective character, both as to cleanliness and ventilation... worse than in London'. The effects of unemployment were seen 'upon the physical constitution' in the 'stunted and withered forms of the parents, while the children grew up incapable of the strong work that would be required of them in this colony'. This subject, continued Cuthbertson, 'was the very question of questions... It was what would be called in England a national question, a question as to the state of the nation'. Cuthbertson was incredulous that in a heaven-blessed country like Australia with its 'millions of acres lying idle' that there were 'thousands wanting employment'. His first remedy was, unsurprisingly, to 'enable every man who desired, to get some land and a homestead of his own'.⁵⁶

In thanking Cuthbertson a Dr Brereton added his, familiar, belief 'that one of the sources of the evils existing in this country was the desire of the people to accumulate money'.⁵⁷ We have seen such concerns, framed in terms of luxury or commerce or 'fictitious credit',⁵⁸ rather than money *per se*, in popular medical literature, in sermons, in newspapers and commentary in Britain earlier in the century, and they were by no means new then. Thomas Carlyle had cast this argument in terms of 'Laissez-faire, Competition and Supply-and-demand' which he upheld as the cause of society's problems. Inevitably in most discussions the health and morality of the nation was a reflection of the health and morality of its men and the solution lay in men themselves. Notice how Carlyle slipped between society and 'you' in the one sentence when he wrote that there was 'no Morrison's Pill for curing the maladies of Society... no "thing" to be done that will cure you'. Society would only be cured when men altered their

⁵⁵ Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man: Being an Answer to Mr. Burke's Attack on the French Revolution*, JS Jordan, London, 1791, p. 45, 153. Richard Whatmore, "A gigantic manliness": Paine's republicanism in the 1790s', in Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore and Brian Young (eds), *Economy, Polity, and Society: British Intellectual History 1750-1950*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, p. 138.

⁵⁶ 'The Condition of the Working Classes: Lecture by Rev W Cuthbertson', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 February 1861.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ *The Times*, 10 November 1800.

'regimen and way of life', divorced themselves from 'luxuries and falsities', and undertook a 'toilsome' return to 'Nature'.⁵⁹

Historian Stephen Gregg says the trope of the sick body-politic was 'worn from usage' by the end of the seventeenth century but it continued to be used into the eighteenth century wrapped up in commentary dealing with luxury, effeminacy, and the nation.⁶⁰ By the 1830s, the disease and plague of the seventeenth century and luxury of the eighteenth (outside forces that made bodies sick or effeminate) had been replaced with notions of constitutions (both individual and national) that could be undermined by the habits and activities of men themselves. The ongoing anxiety that gave rise to such continuity in commentary was the need for men capable of fighting Britain's wars. "The Nation of Shopkeepers," wrote *The Times* defensively, 'is not yet, like *Athens*, *Rome*, or *Carthage*, so sunk in luxury, so degenerated by wealth and commerce, or so lost in a false sense of their own security, as to surrender their country and themselves to the first nation of robbers and murderers that chose to invade them'.⁶¹

Such a statement was understandable in the light of Britain's ongoing wars with France. Thirty years later, in a decade of peace and long after the discourse of luxury, effeminacy and the nation appeared to have run its course, the 1833 Factories Inquiry Commission expressed a surprisingly similar fear: 'By the present system of labour the physical energies of the main portion of the people of this country are destroyed; and I am afraid, if the thing continues much longer, we shall be so enfeebled and effeminated that we shall fall an easy prey to some stronger neighbour...'.⁶² Whether it was John Brown's accusation of 'effeminacy', or Carlyle's that England was dying of 'inanition', the indictment that Britain lacked manly vigour was a serious charge for a country requiring men to be fighting fit or work ready, or both.⁶³ And it was a personal dilemma for men whose nature was conceived as essentially active. By the beginning of the twentieth century, it was an indictment also made in Australia.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Carlyle, *Past and Present and Chartism*, pp. 189, 22-23.

⁶⁰ Stephen H Gregg, "A Truly Christian Hero": Religion, Effeminacy, and Nation in the Writings of the Societies for Reformation of Manners', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 25, Winter, 2001, p. 23.

⁶¹ *The Times*, 31 October 1803, see also 21 March 1804.

⁶² Factories Inquiry Commission, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 1833 (519), p. 28.

⁶³ John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, 5th edition, L Davis and C Reymers, London, 1757, p. 29; Carlyle, *Past and Present and Chartism*, p. 1.

⁶⁴ Stephen Garton, 'War and Masculinity in Twentieth Century Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. (56), 1998, pp. 88-89.

A community of soldiers

This enduring anxiety about men's physical fitness highlights the way in which nations, and national identity, are constituted through war. Of the many varied, and still debated, ways in which a sense of British identity was 'superimposed onto older alignments and loyalties', historian Linda Colley contends that the most important was the series of massive wars between 1689 and 1815 that both allowed the islands diverse inhabitants 'to focus on what they had in common, rather than on what divided them', and 'forged an overseas empire from which all parts of Britain could secure real as well as psychic profits'. British national identity, she asserts 'defined itself through fighting'.⁶⁵ The European history of Australia, however, had no 'romance of battles', 'no glorious victories', 'no roaring of cannon nor flourish of trumpets' by which the nation and the manliness of its men could be confirmed.⁶⁶ Australian soldiers' participation in World War 1 gained such significance because of this perceived lack. Less scholarly attention has been paid to prior conflicts, but Australia's enthusiastic response to the Spanish-American war of 1898, and voluntary enlistment for the South African War in 1899, indicates some eagerness on the part of men to test their manliness on the battle field.⁶⁷ There may have been some apprehension about the outcome of such an endeavour. Concerns over the inferior racial stock of the convicts, Australia's geographic distance from European civilisation, and the establishment of colonies in the continent's more tropical north all fed fears of a possible degeneration of men, none of which were entirely alleviated by the troubled legacy of the South African War.⁶⁸

The South African War did, however, begin the metamorphosis of the bushman into the digger of the Anzac legend – quite literally. The Australian contingents were called 'The Bushmen'. Military chaplain James Green explained that when Britain needed 'men who could ride and shoot', some of the 'farseeing and patriotic squatters' thought of the bushmen. These men, they said, in letters to the newspapers, 'have bushcraft – they can drive a mob of cattle for hundreds of miles across mountain, plain, or river to a

⁶⁵ Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument', p. 316; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, Yale University Press, London, 1992, p. 9.

⁶⁶ Alexander Marjoribanks, *Travels in New South Wales*, Smith, Elder and Co, London, 1847, p. 4.

⁶⁷ Marilyn Lake and Vanessa Pratt, "'Blood Brothers": Racial Identification and the Right to Rule: The Australian Response to the Spanish-American War', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 54 (1), 2008, p. 16; Max Chamberlain, 'The Victorians in the South African War', *Victorian Historical Journal*, vol. 75 (2), September, 2004, pp. 209-210.

⁶⁸ Stephen Garton, 'War and Masculinity', pp. 88-89; Bill Gammage, 'Anzac', in Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush*, p. 61; some discussion of this in Chamberlain, 'The Victorians in the South African War'.

given point. They are used to roughing it in the open. They can get their own food, and cook it; and, if need be, they can live on “the smell of an oil-rag” for a time.’⁶⁹ But it was Gallipoli that commentators, then and since, declared the ‘birth of the nation’, where Australian soldiers showed themselves equal to the best in the world, when Australia proved itself worthy of taking its place on the international stage. As historian Stephen Garton tells us the ‘Anzac legend of mateship, fortitude, larrikinism and anti-authoritarianism may have reflected an older bushman ideal but [Gallipoli] translated it into something national and hence more readily available for a broad, popular and cross-class audience’.⁷⁰ It also confirmed Australia’s identity as a nation born in violence and blood.

The relationship of men and war, of masculinity and nationalism, has not been discussed in this thesis, ignoring the commentary from ancient Greece and Rome through to volumes of contemporary scholarship across many disciplines. Discussions of the equation of military service with citizenship, the appropriation of an aggressive masculinity in the political and military projects of the nineteenth century, and its fanatical expression in the fascism of the twentieth century, have all worried over the seemingly inextricable link between violence and the founding of the polity.⁷¹ Klaus Theweleit goes so far as to say that the nation actually is a ‘community of soldiers’ which in ‘the first instance had nothing to do with questions of national borders, forms of government, or so-called nationality’. Moreover, Theweleit sees crucial resemblances between ‘the battle for the nation’ and ‘men’s own battle to become men’ which he forcefully describes as ‘a battle between life and death, masculinity and femininity, fulfillment and void, sense and insanity. In the battle for the nation, the man acquires the inner value that is his soul’.⁷²

In the context of this thesis, war raises a profound paradox for men in the, perhaps intransigent, strain in expecting men to possess both the qualities needed to sustain the routines of production and those qualities needed to put their bodies at risk if their

⁶⁹ James Green, *The Story of the Australian Bushmen (Being Notes of a Chaplain)*, William Brooks & Co, Sydney, 1903, pp. 2-3.

⁷⁰ Garton, ‘War and Masculinity’, pp. 86, 94.

⁷¹ A sample includes: Mira Morgenstern, ‘Strangeness, Violence, and the Establishment of Nationhood in Rousseau’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 41 (3), 2008, pp. 359-381; Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies I: Women, Floods, Bodies, History*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1987; Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies II: Male Bodies: Psychoanalyzing the White Terror*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1989; Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh, ‘Editors’ Preface’, in Stefan Dudink, Hagemann, Karen and Tosh, John (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2004; Joane Nagel, ‘Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21 (2), 1998, pp. 242-269.

⁷² Theweleit, *Male Fantasies II*, pp. 81-82.

community is threatened from outside.⁷³ War highlights that competing ideals of manliness, such as 'the brave, lone hand, unshackled by responsibility and committed to an essentially male world' versus 'the married breadwinner, king of his suburban castle and capable of supporting his dependants' do not represent historical shifts but rather 'the persistent tension between these ideals'.⁷⁴

True manhood

The relationship of men and war and nation helps to explain the adoption and persistence of the bushman, pioneer, bushranging and Anzac legends despite the unfamiliarity of the experiences captured in these stories; unfamiliar even to most white Australian men. The earliest colonists looked outwards to the ocean and the fortunes made were in whaling, sealing and trading. By the mid-1850s most Australians lived in towns and cities, raising families in a predominantly urban culture.⁷⁵ Why then, as historian Alan Frost asks, did we make those 'bush' myths 'central to our conception of ourselves?' It was a question that Russel Ward also asked: 'Why should so many men have paid to the relatively uncouth frontiersman the supreme compliment of imitating, often unconsciously, his manners and outlook?'⁷⁶ And why do Australian men continue to nurture a cultural idea of themselves as contemptuous of authority and fit for the harsh rigours of bush and of war, allowing it to colour their attitudes and social behaviours, when it is clearly at odds with the real imperatives of their lives as urban-dwelling, law-abiding husbands, fathers and workers?⁷⁷

Most of the criticism of Ward's argument in *The Australian Legend* has not addressed the nub of the problem. Many say the characteristics he identifies as peculiar to the nomadic pastoral workers can be found in other men: Kenneth Dempsey finds the idea of mateship among men of country towns; Doug Morrissey finds an ethical code of conduct among larrikins who travelled around the country together, gathering at pubs to drink, skylark and fight; Angus McIntyre finds the Ned Kelly Gang as popular in

⁷³ Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p. 6.

⁷⁴ Garton, 'War and Masculinity', p. 93.

⁷⁵ Noted by an original reviewer of Ward's book, AGL Shaw, 'Review: Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend*', *The Economic History Review*, vol. 12 (2), 1959, p. 345.

⁷⁶ Alan Frost, 'The Conditions of Early Settlement: New South Wales, 1788-1840', in Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush*, p. 69; Ward, *The Australian Legend*, p. 246.

⁷⁷ Keith Willey, 'A Hard, Dry Humour for a Hard, Dry Land', in Verity Burgmann and Jenny Lee (eds), *Constructing a Culture: A People's History of Australia Since 1788*, McPhee Gribble/Penguin Books, Melbourne, 1988, p. 164.

Melbourne as in rural Victoria; and John Hirst describes pioneers and squatters as 'also bushmen'.⁷⁸ Other critics have queried the autochthonous Australian nature of Ward's sources: Edgar Waters argues that the bush ballad, Ward's major source material, belonged to a literary genre widely diffused through English-speaking countries; Carol Lansbury has suggested that the 1890's writers who enshrined the Australian legend drew on mid-century English literary sources; and Robin Winks and Ronald Lawson find egalitarianism to be more urban in origin, 'rooted in the fluid social structure of the cities', and influenced by English Chartism.⁷⁹ What most miss is that the influence of other cultural and social factors on the bushman, pioneer, bushranger and Anzac legends underscores how they are consoling stories for men caught in the 'entrenched notion that manhood and civilization necessarily exist in a state of tension'⁸⁰ and thus not peculiarly 'Australian'.

Some historians have glimpsed the issues of manliness bound up in the myths. For example, Bill Gammage describes both the bushman and the Anzac as arising from the 'conviction of the brotherhood of man. Each painted a vision splendid, reaching for the heights of what man might do'. AA Philips in the 1950s and John Hirst quoting him in the 1980s, noticed that bushmen, pioneers and squatters all shared the pride that came from escape from the 'fetid slums and tight little hedgerow squares' of an old world into a new continent 'where the strength of individual character as a man determined success or failure'.⁸¹ But it was Ward himself that observed much of what has been covered in the previous pages. He recognised that the sense of loss that accompanies life in complex societies (his word is 'megalopolitan') results in a romanticisation of the 'simple' life and more 'primitive' peoples. He saw this in the pre-1850 travel literature about the life of the bushman which stressed the 'naturalness' and freedom of frontier life, and occasionally consciously compared it with that of the 'noble savage'. He noted how nearly every book on the Australian outback contrasted the 'independence', the 'freedom', and closeness to 'Nature' of the bushman's life with

⁷⁸ Kenneth Dempsey, 'Mateship in Country Towns', in Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush*, p.131; Doug Morrissey, 'Ned Kelly's sympathisers', *Historical Studies*, vol. 18 (71), October, 1978, p. 293; Angus McIntyre, 'Ned Kelly, a Folk Hero', in Carroll (ed), *Intruders in the Bush*, p. 53-53; JB Hirst, 'The Pioneer Legend', pp. 22-23.

⁷⁹ E Waters, *Some Aspects of the Popular Arts in Australia, 1880-1915*, PhD Thesis, The Australian National University, 1962, p. 253; Coral Lansbury, *Arcady in Australia: The Evocation of Australia in Nineteenth-Century English Literature*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1970; Discussed in Ronald Lawson, 'Towards Demythologizing the "Australian Legend": Turner's Frontier Thesis and the Australian Experience', *Journal of Social History*, vol. 13 (4), Summer, 1980, pp. 578, 584.

⁸⁰ Christopher E Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West: Gender, Civilization and the Body*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, New York, 2008, p. 231.

⁸¹ Gammage, 'Anzac', p. 65; JB Hirst, 'The Pioneer Legend', pp. 22-23.

the 'drabness and meanness' of life in the cities.⁸² He understood the continuity in this attitude, that it can be seen as far back as Tacitus romanticising the 'simple' democratic virtues of the 'Germani', and its perpetuation through culture.⁸³ He acknowledged the connections ('however indirect and complicated') between material circumstances and culture ('economic changes and changes in taste') and the way in which nineteenth century Romanticism was a response to industrialisation, promoting motifs of escape that wove their way into representations of the 'noble frontiersman'. He credited writers like Rudyard Kipling and RM Ballantyne for implanting 'in whole generations of young minds an attitude towards the frontiersman, much of which persists subconsciously in adult life, even though the conscious mind may have long disowned romantic fancies'. And he observed the substantial role of Robinson Crusoe, though from his 'point of view even a book like *Robinson Crusoe* is an isolated symptom rather than a cause'.⁸⁴ Perhaps not an isolated symptom but more of a significant link in a long cultural chain that continues to be forged.

The contradictions and tensions for men in a modern world endure, as even a very superficial survey from the mid-nineteenth century to today reveals. Around 1850, entrepreneur and philanthropist Edward William Watkin railed against his physical incapacities, 'those miserable, over-sensitive organs which, chained, cramped and hindered' him, and acknowledged the motivation he found in his family who made him feel, for a time at least, that he 'could trample weakness under foot'.⁸⁵ William Landels' *True Manhood*, in 1861, repeated the messages of the 'ductile' and 'elastic' state of young men; the difficulties of 'cultivating' manliness; the pursuit of authenticity; the need for balance and 'harmony'; caution over the pursuits of leisure time; discretion with books; the necessity for 'selfcontrol'; and, the need for men to be active.⁸⁶ Also in the 1860s *The Cornhill* journal defended the 'manly action' of professions in the civil service in an article that made 'manliness' synonymous with action and independence; gave its advice for achieving and maintaining health based on newer understandings of 'chemical changes' which sound similar to humours or the equalising of bodily inputs

⁸² Ward, *The Australian Legend*, pp. 249-250, 252.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 247, 239

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 252-253, 247.

⁸⁵ Magdalen Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993, p. 305; CW Sutton, 'Watkin, Sir Edward William, first baronet (1819-1901)', rev. Philip S Bagwell, ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/36762>>, accessed 23 July 2010.

⁸⁶ William Landels, *True Manhood: Its Nature, Foundation and Development. A Book for Young Men*, 1861, pp. 7, 22, 38, 43, 132, 142-143, 188, 209.

and outputs; repeated the concerns over 'sedentary men' who were greatly in need of exercise; and pronounced that in becoming civilised men were 'becoming milder'.⁸⁷

Towards the end of the nineteenth century *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* pondered over the 'intangible' but 'essential' source of manners that could not be 'learned by practice or rote'; raised concerns over signs that men needed 'hardening up a little'; and, credited the problem to 'civilization' which in its promotion of sentiment and avoidance of physical pain was 'throttling patriotism and common-sense and virility of national character'.⁸⁸ At the turn of the twenty-first century, consumerist man were still being reassured that even in his use of grooming products he could 'Feel Like a Natural Man;' could choose products to 'fight harsh winter conditions;' and aim for his 'Personal Best' in health, fitness and grooming. And if he thought of whining about shaving, he had 'misplaced his manhood'.⁸⁹

Two very popular self-help books of the late twentieth century reworked the familiar messages of health, freedom, authenticity and the effort needed to achieve successful manhood. Steve Biddulph's *Manhood*, 1994, tackled, according to the book's publicists, 'two critical social issues: creating a healthy masculinity, and how men can free themselves from crippling and outdated roles... Confronting and real, Manhood isn't just something you read, it's something you do'.⁹⁰ Biddulph repeated this message in *Raising Boys*, 1998: 'Boys don't grow up well if you don't help them. You can't just shovel in cereal, provide clean T-shirts, and expect him to one day wake up as a man! You need to follow a certain program'.⁹¹ One reader thought it a 'great book to get one thinking about what it means to be a man'. Another saw the whole message: 'It shows what is wrong with Western Civilisation'. Steve Biddulph, said this contributor to Amazon.com, 'explores what it takes to be a [sic] Adult Male in a properly functioning

⁸⁷ 'The Civil Service as a Profession', *The Cornhill*, vol. 3, 1861, p. 215; 'Health', *The Cornhill*, vol. 3, 1861, p. 332; 'Training in Relation to Health', *The Cornhill*, vol. 9, 1864, pp. 219-230; 'Machinery and the Passions', *The Cornhill*, vol. 11, 1865, p. 541.

⁸⁸ Herbert Maxwell, 'Manners', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 148, October, 1890, pp. 471-472; The Looker-On, 'That Our Hearts, May Be Hardened!' *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 163, January, 1898, pp. 137-140; GW Steevens, 'The New Humanitarianism', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 1898, pp. 98-106.

⁸⁹ GQ (Gentlemen's Quarterly Australia) December 2000; GQ Autumn/Winter 2003; GQ April 2002; GQ December 1998.

⁹⁰ Steve Biddulph, *Manhood*, Finch Publishing, 2002 (1994).

⁹¹ Steve Biddulph, *Raising Boys*, Celestial Arts, Berkely, California, 2008 (1998), p. 9.

society. He looks at why it seems to have gone wrong in our post-Industrial age and what it takes to put it right'.⁹²

In February 2002, 'Pook' rewrote men's anxieties for the beginning of the twenty-first century in a post to an online forum titled 'Towards Manhood'. Lengthy and rambling, the post begins:

Ever since Eve at that critical moment screamed, "Be a MAN!", we have the duty, the pride, the honor, no, the pleasure of being a man. But, alas, many males have become ashamed of the passions that are natural and reasonable and have become proud of those that are shameful and silly. Your grandparents and ancestors called him the "dupe"; others called him the sap. We know him only as "Nice Guy".

For Pook, 'Nice Guy' is the new label for the effeminate man, his 'proper name should be Soft Male'. Nice Guys cannot be heroes, leaders, warriors or lovers. 'Stripped of masculinity, void of manly courage, the Nice Guy is a male that teeters and totters with the waves of his environment. He is not a captain. He has no sail'. In a storm, Nice Guy is scared and frightened, but 'Smooth seas never made successful sailors'. Nice Guy does not adventure, take risks or 'surmount his surroundings'. He is tied down by the 'stones of sensitivity programs' and 'his chains are too weak for [him] to feel until they are too strong for [him] to break'. And those chains are 'forged' early: 'You can hear them clanking throughout childhood'. Part of the problem, for Pook, is a 'break down in the social system' leading to loneliness, despair, and aimlessness, just as a 'break down in the physical form' leads to disease. The terrible consequences of this dysfunction are, therefore, not just for men themselves but for society as a whole: 'Take any civilization and look at its collapse. Masculinity is always in retreat at the latter stages'. Pook's rant prompted sixty four responses of approval and congratulation.⁹³

Historians have played their own part in perpetuating the anxieties of civilization, the essential nature of men, and the relationship of men and adventure: just three very brief examples illustrate this. In 1934, William J Dakin, in the first paragraph of his history of Australian whaling, claimed that the 'emotional effect of adventure' was 'one

⁹² Manhood 101, February 23, 1999, It shows what is wrong with Western Civilisation., February 22, 1999, <<http://www.amazon.com/Manhood-Action-Plan-Changing-Lives/product-reviews/1876451203/>> accessed 22/7/2010.

⁹³ <<http://www.sosuave.net/forum/showthread.php?t=16552>> accessed 22/7/2010.

of those 'human traits which is incorporated in our constitution'. In 1956, Muriel Jaeger credited 'civilisation' as the 'great preoccupation' of that time, 'owing to the general fear that our own civilisation may be in its decadence'. And in 1987, John OC Ross described his biography of a sealing captain, trader and speculator as 'the life and remarkable adventures of William Stewart the sealer'.⁹⁴

Clinging to the old things

'Vagabond', the journalist who eulogised Edward Henty during the jubilee celebrations of his landing at Portland Bay, visited the Henty home in Melbourne. It was for him 'a matter of sentiment', he wanted to 'imbibe the spirit of the place'. And when he was shown to the room in which 'Mr. Richmond Henty, the first white child born in Victoria, came into the world', Vagabond felt that 'visions of the past' would visit him in his dreams that night.⁹⁵ It is such visions of the past that console the unsettled and anxious present of both men and nations attempting to define their identities. We see this, for instance, in Henry Lawson's poetry that exemplified the 'Australian legend':

WHEN you see a man come walking down through George Street loose and
free,
Suit of saddle tweed and soft shirt, and a belt and cabbage-tree,
With the careless swing and carriage, and the confidence you lack--
There is freedom in Australia! he's a man that's clinging back.
Clingin' back,
Holdin' back,
To the old things and the bold things clinging back.⁹⁶

So the 'Australian Legend', is another of those appealing myths that Ian Watt warns us of when discussing *Robinson Crusoe*: inspired by their themes, 'and blinded, perhaps, by our wishes and dreams, we forget the subtle ways by which a consolatory unreality

⁹⁴ Muriel Jaeger, *Before Victoria*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1956, p. ix; William J Dakin, *Whalemen Adventurers: The Story of Whaling in Australian Waters and Other Southern Seas related Thereto, From the Days of Sails to Modern Times*, Sirius Books, Sydney, 1963 (1934), p. xvii; John OC Ross, *William Stewart: Sealing Captain, Trader and Speculator*, Roebuck Society, Canberra, 1987, p. vii.

⁹⁵ *The Argus*, 15 November 1884.

⁹⁶ Henry Lawson, 'Clinging Back', <<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks06/0607541h.html>> accessed 20/5/2010.

has been made to appear real'.⁹⁷ However, the passive voice of this quote obscures who or what makes the consolatory unreality appear real. We cannot blame Daniel Defoe. Nor can we attribute all responsibility to the poets and prose writers who have repeated and reworked such similar themes since the original rendition of *Ulysses*, any more than we can accuse scientists, sociologists, psychiatrists, and professionals from all manner of disciplines who tend to support those themes with their own findings. Reality is created when men act on what they read and hear, giving the next round of social commentators the evidence they need to prove men's essential nature and the ways in which that conflicts with, and is thwarted by, a 'modern', 'civilized' world. As a newspaper reviewer of a new edition of *The Australian Legend* in 2003 wrote, 'Ward exaggerated the legend's influence but the book's success became the best support for its claims'.⁹⁸ Not all of this iterative process is public. As we have seen in previous chapters men committed accounts of their hopes, wishes and struggles into writing that was not meant for a public audience. But these writings reflected and responded to public discourses.

If we pare away the poetry, the prose, the psychological and historical analysis, what really is the difference between British men's dreams of 'the wide unbounding Sea', and Australian men's yearning for the 'wide open spaces' of the 'bush'?⁹⁹ Or between the Brit's stiff upper lip and the Australians' stoic taciturnity. We may see historical change in the way they are described, for instance the stiff upper lip and stoic taciturnity were regarded in the nineteenth century as evidence of self-control whereas now, in the twenty-first century, some might see them as lack of emotional development. But they are still behaviours associated with being a man, and arguably an expression of the struggles that men share. As Theweleit perceptively observed, 'the battle lines between men are repeatedly blurred by the elements of masculinity they have in common'.¹⁰⁰ The 'mateship' that CW Bean thought he discovered as uniquely Australian is, after all, the primary relationship of most soldiers in all armies at war.¹⁰¹ And war, men are still told, is the only place in which to feel the purity and

⁹⁷ Ian Watt, 'Robinson Crusoe as a Myth', *Essays in Criticism: A Quarterly Journal of Literary Criticism*, vol. 1 (2), April, 1951, p. 107.

⁹⁸ Tony Stephens, 'Mate, you're a legend', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 May 2003.

⁹⁹ *Five popular Songs*, c1840s; Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Melbourne, p. 79.

¹⁰⁰ Theweleit, *Male Fantasies II*, p. 408.

¹⁰¹ Alistair Thompson, "'Steadfast Until Death'? C.E.W. Bean and the Representation of Australian Military Manhood", *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 23 (93), October, 1989, p. 475.

intensity of being completely authentic and close to fellow human beings in ways that are not necessary or even possible in civilised society or civilian life.¹⁰²

For all the familiarity of the *Robinson Crusoe* story for men during the period of this study, perhaps the most enticing aspect of the story was its sense of possibility, the idea that all of the contradictions in being a man could be resolved, some place else and some other time, to be sure, but in the accessible future not the forever-lost past. The optimism of so much published and unpublished material from the Australian colonies in its earliest years seemed to pronounce the southern continent as that place. A place where Robert Burns' honest man of independent mind really would be judged on his merit rather than his birth or wealth, or so John Dunmore Lang told readers of his 1852 *Australian Emigrant's Manual* when he wrote 'there is now no part of the world in which it is more true than it is at this moment in Australia, that "A man's a man for a' that."¹⁰³ Unfortunately, like Crusoe who in the face of unfamiliarity and opportunities for innovation recreated on the island his own domestic 'civilised' world,¹⁰⁴ the regeneration of British men in the Australian colonies was compromised by their inability to get beyond themselves and the chains of their culture. It is dispiriting to think that Edmund Burke's observation that the 'great chain of causes, which links one to another, even to the throne of God himself, can never be unravelled by any industry of ours' might still hold true.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Sebastian Junger, *War*, Hachette Book Group, New York, 2010.

¹⁰³ Robert Burns, 'A Man's A Man For A' That', 1795, <<http://www.robertburns.org/works/496.shtml>>, accessed 23/7/2010; John Dunmore Lang, *The Australian Emigrant's Manual; Or, A Guide to the Gold Colonies of New South Wales and Port Phillip*, Partridge and Oakey, London, 1852, p. xvi.

¹⁰⁴ Kevin L Cope, 'All Aboard the Ark of Possibility; or, Robinson Crusoe Returns from Mars as a Small-footprint, Multi-channel Indeterminacy Machine', *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 30 (2), Summer, 1998, p. 161

¹⁰⁵ Edmund Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, London, 1792, p. 207.

Epilogue:

‘Robinson Crusoe untravelled...’

Much of what I have said in this thesis was apparent to the men that I have considered. Pascal eloquently summarised the contradictory condition of men in the seventeenth century, and Rousseau succinctly drew attention to the pitiable result in the eighteenth:

‘When I have occasionally set myself to consider the different distractions of men, the pains and perils to which they expose themselves at court or in war, whence arise so many quarrels, passions, bold and often bad ventures, etc., I have discovered that all the unhappiness of men arises from one single fact, that they cannot stay quietly in their own chamber. A man who has enough to live on, if he knew how to stay with pleasure at home, would not leave it to go to sea or to besiege a town. A commission in the army would not be bought so dearly, but that it is found insufferable not to budge from the town; and men only seek conversation and entering games, because they cannot remain with pleasure at home... They have a secret instinct which impels them to seek amusement and occupation abroad, and which arises from the sense of their constant unhappiness. They have another secret instinct, a remnant of the greatness of our original nature, which teaches them that happiness in reality consists only in rest, and not in stir. And of these two contrary instincts they form within themselves a confused idea, which hides itself from their view in the depths of their soul, inciting them to aim at rest through excitement, and always to fancy that the satisfaction which they have not will come to them, if, by surmounting whatever difficulties confront them, they can thereby open the door to rest’.¹

‘Our inner conflicts are caused by these contradictions. Drawn this way by nature and that way by man, compelled to yield to both forces, we make a compromise and reach neither goal. We go through life, struggling and hesitating, and die before we have found peace, useless alike to ourselves and to others’.²

¹ Blaise Pascal, *Pascal's Pensées*, EP Dutton & Co, New York, 1958 (c1662).

² Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Émile*, JM Dent, London, 1974 (1762), p. 9.

But, it must be said, not all men are like that. Not all men wander restlessly, take risks, go to war, seek to ignore their unhappiness in ceaseless activity and feel they have forever failed. And there were many such men at the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century, those who had 'no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo: all [their] adventures were by the fireside, and all [their] migrations from the blue bed to the brown'.³ William Cobbett was not the only man who saw a role for himself in the domestic activities of home, including the 'night-watchings' of a sick child. Richard Beck (too 'peacable' to feel comfortable with the 'general enthusiasm for the noble art of self defence' that was popular at his school') and John Conder (who did not imbibe 'any of those martial ideas and feelings' when he read Pope's *Iliad*) were not the only ones to find aggression unnatural. Peter Turner was not alone in recalling his youthful running away from home as miserable rather than adventurous.⁴ Not all men's diaries reveal struggle or anxiety. Edward Humphrey's 'diary' kept in one of 'Poole's Lady's and Gentleman's Polite Assistant and Useful Remembrancer For the Year 1831' (palm-sized and much-thumbed) only recorded the miscellany of his life in items copied from newspapers and newspaper cuttings that show his interest in steam engines, fossils, gardening, cures, recipes, the zodiac, symptoms of cholera and the abolition of slavery.⁵ And while some men left reminiscences of their life and adventures for their families to remember them by, others left more prosaic memories, like Stephen Gleeson's details of how to dance various figures of quadrilles, and useful recipes to be passed on including an 'infallible' one for rheumatism that had been in the family for fifty-five years.⁶

Some of the adventurous men we have met in these pages equivocated about the manly behaviours they participated in or observed in other men. JJ Macintyre traveled through America and considered emigration to Mexico, India or China before settling on Australia but he found the drinking culture of Scottish society disgusting. He would avoid the tradition of rum punch after dinner as much as possible, 'slipping out of the room to go to the drawing room if ladies were of the party, or going home direct'.

³ Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Groombridge and Sons, London, 1858, p. 2.

⁴ William Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, Henry Frowde, London, 1906 (1829), p. 143; William Beck, *Family Fragments, Respecting the Ancestry, Acquaintance and Marriage of Richard Low Beck and Rachel Lucas*, Privately Printed by John Bellows, Gloucester, 1897, pp. 16-17; Eustace R Conder, *Josiah Conder. A Memoir*, John Snow, London, 1857, p. 22; Peter Turner, 'A brief account of myself, from my birth to the time when I became a Wesleyan missionary in 1829. Autobiography', ML, B 323, CY 782.

⁵ Edward Humphrey, Diary, WSRO, ADD MSS 32668.

⁶ Thomas Scott, 'Life of Captain Andrew Barclay of Cambock, near Launceston, Van Diemen's Land / written from his own dictation at Cambock, February 19, 1836 to Thomas Scott, Assistant Surveyor-General, V.D.L.'. 74 copies were printed for distribution among family and friends; Stephen Gleeson, Diary, SLV, MS9482, MSB 466.

William Henty, one of that most adventurous and enterprising family in the colonies, supported Thomas Freeman's reservations about his son Luke 'going to Sea'. Charles Wyndham who reminisced so fondly of 'the freedom of America', the independence and lack of care in his few weeks living with the 'North American Indians', had actually written home 'constantly' during that time as he did 'not like America'. Not all settlers in the Australian colonies were successful bushmen. Sarah Davenport's husband was, in her words, 'a bad bush man'. And not all men received *Robinson Crusoe* in the same way. When Absalom Watkin read the story to his children he found its effects quite unexpected when they began speaking about 'killing savages' as a matter of course'.⁷

And yet... In all the instances of non-acceptance or resistance, men revealed their understanding of the particular ideals of manliness that I have been discussing. Cobbett felt it necessary to state that in his domesticity he had not been 'effeminate' or 'idle'. Beck accepted that boys needed to be physically active: it was the lack of organised outdoor games that left his schoolmates 'so restless'. John Conder had come 'to blows' with schoolmates, though only two of them, and he searched for 'the spirit of adventure' in his childhood self but found the evidence 'trivial:' exploring the house and garden alone at night, or sitting in the cold in his night-gown at the parlour door, listening to the organ, long after he had been sent to bed.⁸ Oliver Goldsmith planned to emigrate to America.⁹ Samuel Bamford expressed admiration for his father on the basis of a much sought-after, but surely almost unachievable, balance of being both learned and proficient in a fight. And John Aikin preferred to think of the experiences of his life as those 'of a traveller who has fully explored a tract'. Despite his life being uneventful, he congratulated himself that it was 'a favourable mixture of the active and the contemplative'.¹⁰

⁷ JJ Macintyre Papers Vol I, BL, MS ADD 41742, L77, L155-156; Thomas Freeman to William Henty, Henty Family Papers; Charlotte Wyndham to George Wyndham 27 December 1844, Ella Wyndham to George Wyndham 30 December 1845, Ella Wyndham to George Wyndham 1 August 1840, Extracts from Dinton-Dalwood letters, 1827-1853, ML, MSS 1657, CY 3815; Davenport quoted in Lucy Frost, *No Place for a Nervous Lady: Voices From the Australian Bush*, Mcphee Gribble/Penguin Books, Fitzroy, Vic, 1984, p.247; Magdalen Goffin (ed), *The Diaries of Absalom Watkin*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993, p. 64.

⁸ Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, pp. 159-160; Beck, *Family Fragments*, pp. 16-17; Conder, *A Memoir*, pp. 21, 24.

⁹ He sold his horse to pay for the passage but missed his ship: John A. Dussinger, 'Goldsmith, Oliver (1728?-1774)', ODNB, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2009 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.virtual.anu.edu.au/view/article/10924>>, accessed 16/7/2010.

¹⁰ Samuel Bamford, *The Autobiography of Samuel Bamford. Volume One: Early Days Together with an Account of the Arrest, &c.*, Frank Cass, London, 1967 (1849), pp. 2-3; John Aikin, *Letters from a Father to His Son, on Various Topics Relative to Literature and the Conduct of Life, Vol. II, Written in the Years 1798 and 1799*, J Johnson and T Bensley, London, 1800, pp. 329, 339-340.

Perhaps the most pointed example of the normative aspect of these ideals of manliness is the material that John Younger left for a memoir of himself. A writer and shoemaker who died in 1860 just three miles from where he was born, Younger gave this material the title 'Obscurities in private life developed, or, Robinson Crusoe untraveller'.¹¹ Younger was born in 1785 in Longnewtown in the Scottish borderlands and died in St Boswells in 1860. He spent those years marrying, raising a family, making shoes and writing poetry. Like many of Hobsbawm's political shoemakers, Younger commenced work at nine years of age but was very well read: he quoted and discussed the likes of Locke, Hume, Rousseau, Johnson, Shakespeare, Burns, Swift, Scott, Wordsworth and Lord Chesterfield. But Younger was not involved in political agitation, never travelled to London, let alone across the sea, and barely participated in the emerging consumer society. The lives of his family and friends were a 'very different affair' to anything 'written by these high-flying novelists and imaginative tale-tellers', and Younger hoped that the reader would 'peruse' his reminiscences 'as you would a draught of plain, cooling water after a heating fuddle'.¹² And yet when he gave his life a title it was of *Robinson Crusoe* that he thought.

The potency of the story, and the reason for its enduring power, lies in the fact that Crusoe is not a noble ideal, but rather an everyman who accomplishes something very desirable – he seems to conquer the contradictions of real life. He is the disobedient son who does not come to a bad end; the fortune-seeker who learns the valuelessness of money and ends up wealthy none-the-less; the slave-owner with a free conscience because he saved Friday from cannibals; a man of strong faith without the interference of church; the successful settler who never settles. Crusoe made the promise of the colonies – that a man could be both adventurer and settler, both wild and domesticated – seem possible. 'Crusoe', then, is one of de Tocqueville's 'abstract words' that acts like a box with a false bottom so that 'you may put in it what ideas you please and take them out again unobserved'.¹³ Words like 'nation', 'adventure', 'independence' and even 'land' work in the same way: they mean different things to different people, they signify different things in different times and different places, yet they create the illusion that we all understand what is being spoken of, and that this has always been the case. 'Man' is also such a word.

¹¹ Thomas Seccombe, 'Younger, John (1785–1860)', rev. Wray Vamplew, ODNB, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30289>>, accessed 28/3/2008.

¹² Eric Hobsbawm, 'Political Shoemakers', *Uncommon People: Resistance, Rebellion, and Jazz*, The Press, New York, 1998, pp. 18–43; John Younger, *Autobiography of John Younger, Shoemaker, St. Boswells*, J & JH Rutherford, Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1881, pp. xii, xvi, xviii, xxii, xxiv, 17, 53.

¹³ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Harper & Row, New York, 1966, p. 450.

The way in which a person thinks of a social situation, a fact or an event, that motivates them to act in a certain manner, is not dependent on that social situation, fact or event but rather on the conceptual framework, or discourse or metanarrative, through which they have made it meaningful. While this framework in which people experience the world, conceive themselves as subjects, and undertake their actions is as much a representation of cultural categories as a reflection of a social reality, it can successfully regulate social behaviour and feel as if it is beyond the individuals' power to transcend. Every metanarrative or discourse is generated from inside another one, is a reconfiguration of a previous one that has the potential to limit the one which it replaces. Discourses are, therefore, more intertextual than representational in nature, creating a conceptual chain that is never broken.¹⁴ The illusion of naturalness in this process is 'so subtle that we breathe it as we do the air, without being conscious of the minute particles that enter into its composition'.¹⁵ The preceding pages have traced some of the links in this conceptual chain of meaning in 'being a man' – the links of traditional expectations, remade as new links when challenged by changing material circumstances – showing how male subjectivity, or identity, is 'discursively forged' through the 'depository of meanings' with which men 'endow their world and themselves'.¹⁶ The recognition of the 'fictional' aspects of discourse, however, should not allow us to underestimate how real, 'perhaps disastrously real, men's attempt to live out these fictions may be'.¹⁷

The role of language in this process is elemental. But the power of words blinds us to their ambiguity. This is by no means a new observation. Montaigne observed that although most people he conversed with spoke the same language, he could not say whether they 'think the same thoughts'. He used a tellingly physical analogy to make his point: 'The generality of readers, when they find a like robe, very mistakenly imagine they have the same body inside it, but force and sinews are not to be borrowed, though the attire may'.¹⁸ More than two hundred years later, philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein pondered the possibility of a 'private language', using Robinson

¹⁴ Miguel A Cabrera, Anna Fagan and Marie MacMahon, 'On Language, Culture, and Social Action', *History and Theory*, vol. 40 (4), December, 2001, pp. 86-87, 90, 96.

¹⁵ John Wilson Croker to William Brougham, 1854, on the power of the printed word, quoted in A Aspinall, *Politics and The Press c.1780-1850*, Home & Van Thal Ltd, London, 1949, p. 4.

¹⁶ Cabrera, Fagan and MacMahon, 'On Language, Culture, and Social Action', p. 93.

¹⁷ Lynne Segal, 'Changing Men: Masculinities in Context', *Theory and Society*, vol. 22 (5), October, 1993, p. 630.

¹⁸ Michel de Montaigne, *The Works of Michael De Montaigne; Comprising His Essays, Letters, And Journey Through Germany and Italy*, C Templeman, London, 1865, p. 73; Robert Ulich (ed), *Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom: Selections from Great Documents*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1948, p. 298.

Crusoe to work through his argument, and concluded that there could be no such thing.¹⁹ Existentially interesting and problematic, words can also ‘do deadly work sometimes’. This was the conclusion of John Ruskin in 1865. He called the dangerous ones ‘masked words... which nobody understands, but which everybody uses, and most people will also fight for, live for, or even die for, fancying they mean this, or that, or the other, of things dear to them’. Like de Tocqueville’s bottomless boxes, Ruskin saw these words as ‘the unjust stewards of all men’s ideas:’ men give to these words the care of their most cherished ‘fancy or favourite instinct’ until ‘the word at last comes to have an infinite power over him’ so that you cannot know the man without the aid of the word (‘you cannot get at him but by its ministry’).²⁰ ‘Man’ is such a word.

It is entirely possible that this work can be read as a complaint – ‘it’s not easy being a man’. Which is quite correct – it was not easy being a man in Britain and the Australian colonies at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries and it is not easy being a man now.²¹ But surely in this context, there is a new meaning that we should put into the bottomless-box that sometimes refers to ‘man’ – surely it’s not easy being ‘human’? If language creates the chains, it is we who create the language, even, perhaps especially, the language of gender. We should, therefore, heed one of Christopher Claxton’s handy tips in his 1833 *Naval Monitor*. We should be careful about binding ourselves ‘with imaginary chains, as though our real ones were not sufficient’.²²

¹⁹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, ‘Notes for Lectures on “Private Experience” and “Sense Data”’, in James C Klagge and Alfred Nordmann (ed), *Philosophical Occasions 1912-1951*, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1993, pp. 237, 247, 320; Ron Ben-Tovim, ‘Robinson Crusoe, Wittgenstein, and the Return to Society’, *Philosophy and Literature*, vol. 32, 2008, p. 286.

²⁰ John Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies. Two Lectures Delivered at Manchester in 1864*, Smith, Elder & Co, London, 1865, pp. 31-33; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume 2 – Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2004, p. 157.

²¹ For some discussion on the theme that masculinity is always in crisis: Bryce Traister, ‘Academic Viagra: the Rise of American Masculinity Studies’, *American Quarterly*, vol. 52 (2), June, 2000, pp. 274-304; Konstantin Dierks, ‘Men’s History, Gender History, or Cultural History?’ *Gender & History*, vol. 14 (1), April, 2002, pp. 147-151; John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire*, Pearson Longman, Harlow, England, 2005, pp. 20-25.

²² Christopher Claxton, *The Naval Monitor; Containing Many Useful Hints For Both the Public and Private Conduct of the Young Gentlemen In, or Entering, That Profession, In All Its Branches*, AJ Valpy, London, 1833, p. 218.

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Mitchell Library	ML
National Library of Australia	NLA
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